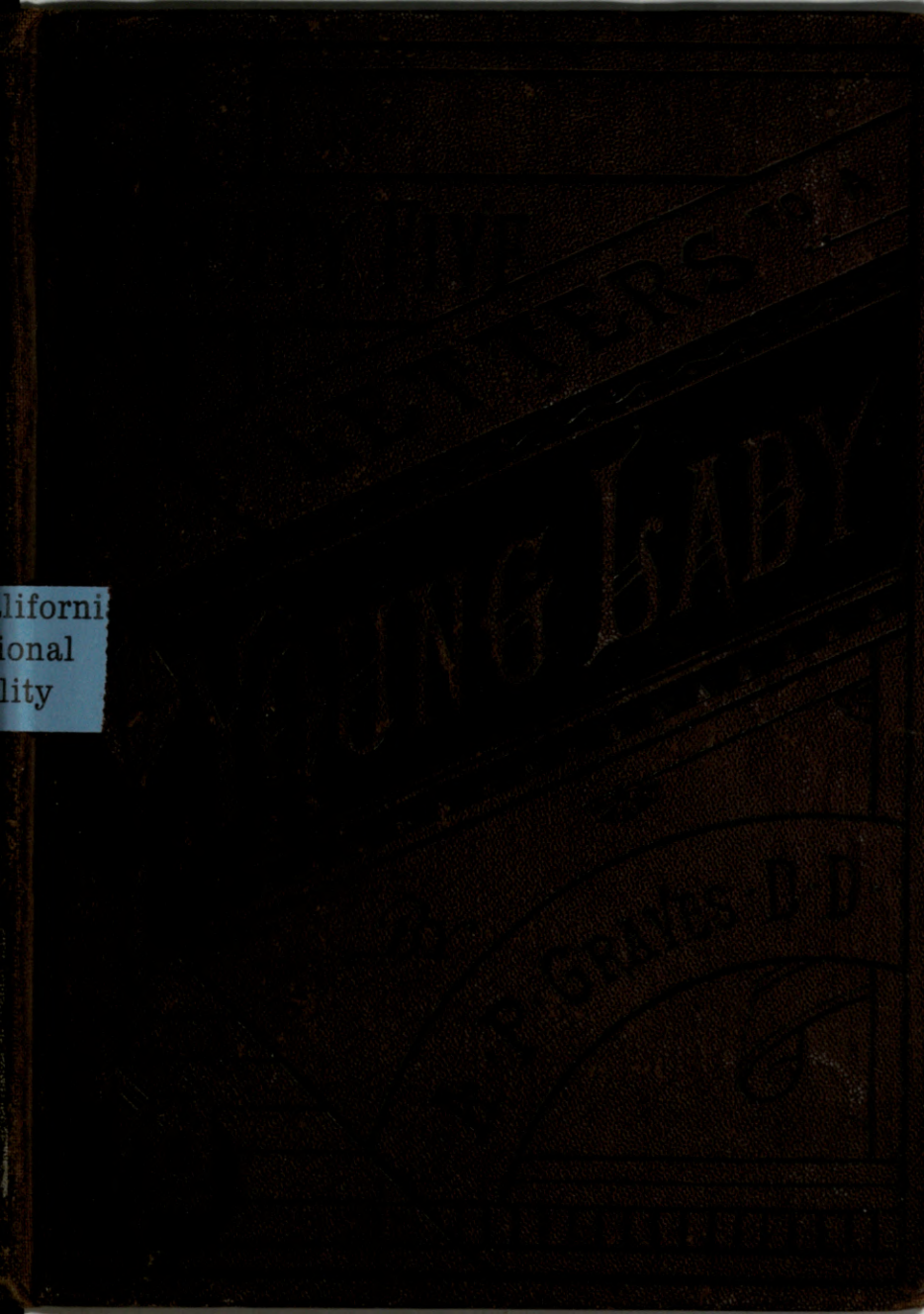

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TWENTY-FIVE LETTERS

TO A

YOUNG LADY.

BY

A. P. GRAVES, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF

"FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN," AND "DOWN GRADE; A BOOK TO SAVE TEMPTED YOUNG MEN."

SIXTH EDITION.

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1884.

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A. P. GRAVES, D. D.

1879.

TO THE

THOUSANDS OF YOUNG LADIES

WHOM I HAVE INSTRUCTED IN THE WAY OF HIGHER MORALITY, AND SOUGHT TO LEAD IN THE HEAVENLY PATH, THESE LETTERS ARE HUMBLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

2041646

PREFACE.

Desiring to answer some important and practical questions which are daily asked by many young ladies, I have prepared this series of letters. Varied and large experience in my profession as an evangelist, has urged the importance of such a suggestive volume. From my niece Etha H., and others, I sought questions which I have answered in this plain way, without the slightest attempt at literary merit. Limited space, and fragments of time for their writing amid incessant evangelistic work, have compelled their brevity. May they be serviceable to thousands of young ladies, is the prayer of the author.

A. P. G.

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TWENTY-FIVE LETTERS

TO

A YOUNG LADY.

LETTER I.

WOMEM SUPREME AMONG MEN.

My Dear Niece:—You have urged upon me a correspondence expressing to you my views of the worth and power of woman. I shall aim to give you as much thought in a few letters as my knowledge and time will allow, and hope they may be a benefit to you and others of your sex who are just starting in life. Ask any questions freely and fully. This question: "*What constitutes woman's supremacy?*" is vast and potent. None could be more so. Eve damned the world and Mary gave to us a Savior. Some object to this view and say, do not charge so much upon the woman; but I insist that Eve did tempt the man, and that he yielded because of the overpowering influence of the woman. And such has been the case from that day until the present. Woman has held the balance of power for good or evil in all the ages. The Eves and the Marys have influenced the character of men

more than all other created beings. The very nature of her being compels her supremacy. Her affections are among her most powerful factors. These are enough to give her the highest position. No other being ever stood thus. Her instinctive adaptability to counsel and persuade man, surpasses that of all other beings. And where was there ever a minister, lawyer, educator, congress hall or university that had such influence over man as a mother, sister or wife? It is true and cannot be gainsaid that woman is supreme. If her aims and chastity be right, and her life pure, she is so; and if evil and sin has seized upon her being, making her powers and influence wrong, it is none the less so. *How do men regard women in relation to this supremacy?* I will tell you. They feel it deeply and continually. They cannot avoid it; and many rejoice in it as a living fact, especially those who are controlled by good, wise and virtuous women. How many a man has scaled the very heights of prosperity, and attained position in religion, wealth or influence, and truly and justly attributed his standing to the wise counsel and influence of woman. And how many a poor fallen wretch of a man has drunk the cup of sorrow to its very dregs, when a woman led him down. She was irresistible. Her influence swept away his resolutions like chaff before the wind. I do not say, dear Etha, that

man has no powers. He has. They are gigantic; but those of woman are more so. How important, then, that she be right. And that reminds me of your question, "*Does piety give a woman a higher rank in the estimation of men?*" Yes, it does. You know, Etha, that as a public man I have been brought in contact with masses of my fellow men of all conditions and callings in life for many years, and I give you this testimony, that I have never yet seen the first man who did not respect a woman more for being a Christian. That is, if words and acts are evidence. It is true that infidels, worldlings and fellows of the baser sort often seek to lead women into unbelief and sin; but for all this, when I have sifted this matter, I have invariably found that men have admired the Christian character of any woman, be she mother, sister, wife or friend. Even if he were next to a brute her charms constrain him to do this. *Do women realize the power of their influence?* Some of them do to an immense extent; but others are very careless about the matter. And I must tell you, my dear niece, you could not have asked me a more vital question, "Does a woman realize the power of her influence?" What if she does not, and all her powers are let loose and run riot like a sweeping wind upon the prairie? Wake up, young friend, to this thought, and let the very asking

arouse in you a purpose to understand your position. Surely as you live you have powers about which you cannot be thoughtless or aimless. Do you know this is the bane of tens of thousands of girls in our day? Education, wealth, friends and grand opportunities are all about them, but they are utterly careless of their strength and life. Bestir thy every thought and "know thyself." The endowments of your heart and affections, together with moral, mental and physical powers, are not to be lightly esteemed. Well would it be for every young lady and the world about her, if she would study to realize her influence and use it wisely. This is the great need of the hour with American girls. Leaving school and casting about for some plan to employ time and talent, what thoughtlessness there is as to the best way. How much at this important period should she consider her powers and position, "woman as God made her." Potent indeed is the thought at which you aim when you ask, *Can a young lady overestimate the responsibility devolving upon her?* Impossible! "Aim at the sun if you do not get half way up," is the motto that some one has given to the world. It is good for you, and every young lady should observe it. Inferior motives, circumstances and influences may obtain to an extent; but God will hold her responsible for her acts, be they good or bad. Her respon-

sibility is emphatically her own. It does not belong to father, mother, sister or brother; it is her own, and of this she must have a conception to some extent. Overestimate! What, with all her powers, mental and moral, to enjoy untold happiness or to endure untold misery in this world, and review with immortal vision all the bearings of her responsibility in the world to come. No, no, my dear niece, there can be no overestimating such gifts, and what is required of them. Her aspirations should be high if wisely directed. They can not be too much so. Of course you know I could not encourage her to aspire in anything to work her injury. She must in the very nature of the case be responsible for the bad as well as the good, the wrong as well as the right. And not only has our Maker given instruction to guide, but the example of young women in the past has taught its striking lessons. Some of them are grand, others are sad, very sad. Then note your responsibility in all your aspirations, and take such steps as will lead you to the heights of happiness and not the depths of sorrow. It is possible for every young lady to tread the mountain tops of power and blessing such as other mortal never knew, and then descend to walk the banks of the gently flowing river of sweet and untold affection, as it is possible for no other being. Earnestly, YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER II.

LOVE.

My Dear Niece:—Perhaps you do not comprehend the import of the questions you have asked me about love. Sure am I, however, if I am able to give you even a hint at some of the relations of this subject, the bearing of this letter upon your life will not be in vain. Can I tell you *the foundation of true love?* Yes, I can. But let me tell you first what it is not. It is not barely human emotions excited by the passions of human beings. It is not the gush of feeling which can only actuate a cry or a laugh, a tear or a smile. It is not blind zeal, impelled by the inclinations of a carnal heart.

But it is an element in our nature, God-given and Godlike. *This is true love*, and will never degenerate unless compelled to by wilful sin. There may be natural attachments which develop themselves in various ways among men and beasts, but this is not what we are talking about. Our theme is nobler, grander, and worthy alone of immortal beings made in the image of the Divine Creator. And of all these upon the earth, the young lady has her loveliness and beauty. Let her

recognize and prize this pure and strong foundation, and she will at once stand high in the scale of her being. Do you see, dear Etha, the import of this question, and the answer? It is not strange that you are so excited about solving the question of love, and are anxious *to know how you may avoid the contaminations of false love so prevalent.* Many young ladies desire this. And many are decoyed by some wily foe ere they are aware of it. The snares are numerous and cunning. But there is no need that a girl should be overtaken by false love. She has the balance of power in her own hands. Let her study to know the location and force of true love, as above defined, and she has the first lesson of her defense. The almost insurmountable barrier to be overcome now is, the debasing opinion of public sentiment. Let me mention one feature of this school: The dancing of the times. I mean every link in the chain, from the parlor dance down to the lowest step of a lewd dance-house. In this there is a development of love. Not Godlike, but manlike. How many choice angel-like young ladies enter into this practice, pure in motive and life, only to graduate amid the false contaminations of love? And they are gone. So amid a hundred kindred practices in the whirling schemes of worldly vice. No young lady can afford to tarnish her love in this way. So I

say if you would avoid these contaminations, guard well every avenue and risk not a hair's breadth that would imperil the sacredness of your love, for this world or another.

Will not high respect and esteem be sufficient for all the demands of married life? I know this question would have to do with many, unless appearances deceive. But I answer No, emphatically *No.* True happiness must have true love. It is not enough for a wife to respect her husband, neither for the husband to respect the wife. They must have predominating love. Nothing short of this will fill God's design. The very nature of the case demands this. There is no place on earth that has the advantages for love and its fruits as the home. Then do not let down the standard of pure elevating love to simple respect and esteem.

You ask, *Is the power of love fully understood,*

No, it is not. As well might we say that no more could be known of geography or astronomy. Its resources are boundless as its blessings. And who can ever tell the story of its benefits? The power of love is as unsearchable as its Creator. And to fully understand it would be as impossible as to drain the ocean by a drop at a time. And with this instinctive view, I might well expect you would ask me, *With what safeguards should a young lady hedge her love?* First, she should make up her

mind to hedge it at all hazards. Purpose in this is as essential as a fountain to a large river. Let a young lady know her love, its worth and power, and then determine to protect it, and she has learned the first lesson of its blessings for this world and another. If truly blessed herself, she will want to bless others. And time closely occupied with useful labor will help and bless. Love can be formed for labor and industry as well as for the foolish pastimes of earth. "Idleness is the devil's workshop," is the adage. And our young ladies are in more danger from having no well-directed employment of time and talent, than from anything else. There are doubtless exceptions to this, but they are few. Love is not indolent, but active. It will act. It will ascend into the high scale of noble character, or descend into the low avenues of selfishness and sin, just where you please to put it. If a young lady is not willing to enter into work of the hardest and of every kind at home, commanding her attention and attachments around the most sacred of all altars, she is in danger. She will be likely to use her home as a sort of hotel, a stopping place of convenience while her love is running in looseness after the fancies of the world, that will be likely to swallow her up in the pitfalls of indolence and unhappiness. Then I say, dear Etha, would you be guarded from the dangers of false love, have some-

thing to do at home. Let the hours of each day have their allotment of care and duty. This every young lady in every department of life should have. It will be sure to form society for her, and mark out a path of life that will develop toward her the purest love, and shield her from the false. Yea, more, it will lead to the highest spheres of action for holiness and heaven.

Perhaps I ought to say before closing this letter, that mothers are often fearfully responsible for the contaminations, by false love, of their daughters. They are so anxious to get them into society, and often encourage them into circles of vice and danger. Better school them at home in industry and high aims, until the right door for entertainment and usefulness shall open. May this sentiment be studied, and arouse some coming mothers to wise action. Yea, prove a blessing to some coming young ladies when my pen shall cease to write.

Lovingly yours.

LETTER III.

SPHERES OF USEFULNESS.

My Dear Niece:—I am glad you wish me to devote one letter suggesting some things to help you to be useful. The desire is worthy of an angel. Yes, it is. Even Jesus "took upon himself the form of a servant." And for a young lady to be anxious to know how, and by what means she may be made useful is notably worthy. I wish I had no occasion to intimate that there are exceptions to this. Alas, it is too true. Yea, the exceptions are numerous. There are so many young ladies that seem to have no idea of spending the very bloom of their lives in anything but fun and pastime. It is too bad, and all wrong. Our powers for good to bless the world are just as valuable in youth as in middle life or old age. I do not mean that young people should not have proper time for pleasure and happiness, but against young ladies going forth into society, with all their mighty powers, to sow seeds of injury to themselves and others, as so many do, I raise my pen and voice in most earnest protest. I mean our young ladies of intelligence and influence. Those who mould the society of the gay

and the fashionable. How useful they might be in every department of human need. And what avenues of distress are crying out for their helping hand. You ask, "*Has not each one a special mission?*" If you mean has not God some good thing for every young lady to do, I answer yes. Can any one be so lost to the instincts of an immortal being as to believe that a single one has been made to no purpose? No, it is not true. Every one has a talent and gifts for some good sphere of action. Think of a young lady, by her presence, giving countenance to the gambling pools of a horse race, the bacchanalian zeal of a wine party, the card circle that so often leads in the way to ruin, and the theater, always demoralizing. Is she thus in a sphere of usefulness? Is this, or can it possibly be, the mission of a single young lady? Think and answer.

Then I can only say, while talents and circumstances may differ, every young lady should find her place *and fill it.* "*Can others do our work?*" This is a potent question. One person cannot, certainly, fill the place of another. As well might one young lady undertake to marry a husband for another. When you were in school you could not learn the history or Latin lesson for another. Every acquisition had to be your own. So in each department of life, each duty must be your own.

And no young lady need wait or look long for work. In philanthropy, the sick, the poor, the sorrowing, the cast-down, the dejected, the distressed, and the lost, are ever stretching out their hands for help and comfort. And I hold that there is no class that can minister to such needy ones as well as young ladies can. Capable of fine, buoyant affections, with the tender instincts of a woman and gentleness of loving hearts, they can soothe, comfort and bless as no other can. And, dear Etha, the world all around you is crying out for your blessing. Let every young lady, who feels that she has been educated barely to speak correctly and appear intelligent, and her daily business is for adornment and to show herself, stop and listen. She will soon hear some plaintive voice of man, woman, or child, calling, "Help me, feed me, give drink to my parched lips, shelter me, clothe me, teach me, or give me a kind word in my sorrow." If it is in your power to relieve, to say, "That is a tramp," or, "They do not deserve help," or, "Some other can do it," will not answer. You are the one called, and *to you* God has given this mission. I do feel that I cannot impress this idea of personal duties too strongly upon your youthful heart. *What is success in the usefulness of a young lady?* This must be measured in varied ways. All things in this world are done imperfectly. But to do all

she can and the best she can in whatever be her calling, must be at least a showing of success. *Can she be fitted mentally for professional life?* Some can and ought to be. But I will treat more of this in another letter. *Should a young lady despise manual labor?* Never. This is a fact that every father, mother and daughter ought to learn. If she is willing to do this, and knows how, even if circumstances do not require it, it will do no harm. But how much misery the opposite notion has caused. In wealth one day and poverty the next, how many a young woman has been compelled to dismiss her servants and take her place in the kitchen to do the things she has hated and of which she is entirely ignorant. And a mother that will bring up her daughter that way ought never to be permitted the privilege of looking upon an innocent, smiling girl in the cradle. I care not if she is worth her millions. Some day she may exchange the palace for a log cabin. And if she does not it may become the lot of her daughter.

Most truly yours.

LETTER IV.

CHOOSING A HUSBAND.

My Dear Niece:—So you are thinking of getting married are you? Well, that is nothing strange. Just like young ladies! And it is all right. God designed it should be so. But I must tell you, my dear Etha, that my heart has been stirred to its depths for years over the painful desolations of unwise and unhappy relations in the marriage of not a few. I shall answer your questions in this letter, in substance as I have long advised young ladies in the choice of a husband and a home. And I must tell you the choice is yours and not the men's. You and others may dissent from this position. But look one moment. Think, consider, and you will see. "Popping the question," proposing marriage, whiling away a few evenings in courtship, taking a ride or a walk, or exchanging a few love letters are a very small part of the subject in hand. And this leads me to your first question, "*How shall I choose a husband?*" First, consider what you are about to do. And above all recognize the institution of marriage *as divine*. God made it. It is not a thing of human

genius, or for the blind behests of human pastime and pleasure. It is not to barely gratify the whim of man's notions, like the contract to work a farm, build a house or to enter into mercantile business. Neither is it the mere plaything that many boys and girls seem to think. No, no! it is God-given, and when rightly viewed and entered into, it will be God-honored by purity and blessedness. But the saddest feature of domestic life in our country to-day is, that so many choose marriage in the careless sin of human indulgence. Many a girl who is pure, and lovely, and pious, and has consecrated her life upon some sacred church altar, makes a wreck of herself because she failed to comprehend the true relations and objects of marriage. Possibly her mother may have been more culpable than herself, but there is fearful blame somewhere. The first principles being overlooked, of course all is wrong and disaster follows. And no marvel that she sorrows and weeps away the very years of her young womanhood over the desolation of what should have been a happy home. But her home is just what she has made it. I insist, it is the woman that makes the choice of the husband and the home. The man is the instrument, and she wields it. He may be a man of mind, influence and strength, but when he offers his hand to a young lady, that moment and onward she has the balance

of power. This is in the nature of the case. If she takes a stand then, and maintains it, to avoid such things as would debase his nature, habits, and life, such as Sunday rides, card, wine, and other parties of doubtful influence, theaters, ball-rooms, club-houses and the like, false words, dishonest habits and practices, and in a word unhallowed associations, she has gone a long way in at least a happy direction. The way is now prepared for her to enter and tread the road that has made many a home almost a very heaven upon earth. I say then to you as a young lady, do not let down the standard at the very beginning. God designed that young men and women should marry and find their happiness in each other, and in the home, and not in the vain unsatisfying pastimes of earth. Furthermore, to ascend high in the scale of domestic bliss, you should have great care for hallowed communion with God, and the man of your choice. Pray over the matter, and that too during social visits and counsel. If God has given this institution and relation, he should certainly be counseled in its forming. And just here I remember you asked me "*If it is wise to marry a man who is otherwise worthy, but is a skeptic?*" I suppose you mean if she wish to lead a Christian life. I must say no. Many a woman has done this to her sorrow. He may be honest as a citizen, and provide well for his family. But

correct social and moral sentiments make up true happiness. If he be skeptical about God and his word, to feign harmony and happiness with him would be only a miserable failure of pretention. You also ask me, "*If a man will not give up bad habits before marriage can he be expected to afterward?*" Observation of facts compels me to answer in the negative. The young lady who risks this does it at her peril. And our whole land in city and country is one vast charnel house of painful evidence to this. Divorces, misery, distracted homes, wives, husbands and children disgraced and sad, are on every hand as the fruit of such presumption by our fairest and most lovely young ladies. If a young lady will not reform a young man before marriage, there is little hope that she can do it afterward. The chances are vastly against her. And this is the lesson of the age for our girls to learn. Lesson of infinite importance! And those who have learned it have become happy wives, good mothers and pillars in society. Young ladies are the teachers of young men. They may not be aware of this, but it is nevertheless true. They weave about them an influence that compels and controls. And I believe that when this influence is wrong, it has more to do in demoralizing our young men than any other power. Many young ladies want to attend the theater, the dance, and the

circus, and go on Sunday rides. Of course the young men are expected to pay the tickets and livery bills. Most of them have small salaries. And when young ladies have led them on in this kind of dissipation, they are just prepared for the billiard hall and club-room at their leisure hours when they are not with the girls. This squanders their money, demoralizes their habits, and not unfrequently leads them to pilfer the drawer of the store for extra dollars. So, many of them go down and often end their lives homeless, friendless, and in the darkest night, while others marry, but after having graduated from such a school, under the tutorage of those who should have given better instruction, make a wretched home and eke out a miserable existence. This is no fancy sketch. The very wails of society are uttered in its confirmation. But, my dear Etha, glance an instant at the other and brighter side of the picture. There is a happier view and a sure way to reach it. A way strewn with roses and fragrant as the refreshing air of a spring morning. It is this. Let a young lady make up her mind to shun everything that would vitiate the morals of society, and apply with all her might all influence possible to elevate and make noble the minds of men, and she will at the proper time and place find what she seeks, *a happy home.* This is the only safe way. Now, I will close this letter by reverting to your

question, "*What will she do, if in choosing she make a mistake?*" I can not tell. This is a question that vast numbers of girls once fair and lovely, but now with crushed, broken hearts, ask amid the sighs of a wretched home. Some may have been deceived, but many of them never ought to have come to this. They willfully made their mistake with their eyes wide open. This much I can say, however, I always pity such in the bottom of my heart, and let me say to you and every other young lady, beware, be wise, be careful.

Yours with interest.

LETTER V.

HOW TO TREAT HIM MORALLY.

My Dear Niece:—This letter opens a vast field; and were I capable, I am aware many things might be said in it well worthy of an angel. There are so many items of interest and profit that cluster around the married life, that a hint at even the most vital points can hardly be given in a single letter. "*Will he look for an example?*" I know not whether he will look for it or not, but he will get it. Example is inevitable with every living soul; and it only requires time for every wife to make this felt by her husband and children. A good example will be admired in all days, present and future; a sad one will be deplored. "*Is not this of more importance than choosing him?*" In some respects it may be. It is certainly of imperative importance. Who can tell the weight and consequences of a bad example; and what untold gratitude has flowed from the heart of a husband and father, and from sons and daughters, for the hallowed example of a good mother? No tongue can tell, or pen can write, the importance of this. This is the moral lever of the world to-day;

and its controlling influence lies in the powers of a young mother. Seldom does a woman set the example she ought, if she does not begin young.

"*Does not the moral nature respond most affectionately to kind treatment?*"

"Like begets like," is a saying among men; and I apprehend there is no place where this is more true than with a wife and her husband. Of course, no man that has the instincts and courage of a manly heart is pleased to see a wife constantly demean herself in what is termed "cleverness." He wants to see her stand forth with the dignity of a woman—firm, but kind; and to this his heart will respond with admiration and profit. This is often the secret of a woman's power; and before it the cold and chilly nature of her husband will melt and bow, not only into submission but blessedness. There is a sense in which many a woman can put herself firmly in a right position before her husband, and yet in the deepest affection. If she loved him less, she would be less firm and affectionate. And do you suppose he would look upon such a wife, and such acts in her, without respect? Nay, he would prize her as a jewel. But there is a possibility of a wife's taking the opposite course in word and act. She is irritable and unkind; and that, too, when she thinks she is an affectionate wife. Strange is her deportment, and

unhappy her influence. I have heard such try to excuse themselves "on account of health, or because it was their way." This is no apology. If a woman wants a happy home filled with gentleness and affection, she must make it. She must be mistress of this school. And if such treatment does not win the husband and children to fill her heart with joy nothing will. But just here let me answer your question: "*Are not faultfinding and indifference the cause of much misery?*" This is the other side of the picture, and I answer, they are, and cannot fail to be. Changing the phraseology of Scripture a little, it is here clearly seen that whatsoever a woman sows, that shall she also reap.

Yes, "misery;" it is the cause of much misery. No man can bear scolding from his wife. He may deserve it many times over; but a woman, and a wife at that, is certainly not the one to administer it, unless it is thoroughly tempered with love. God made her to love, and when she deports herself otherwise she is like a man trying to walk with a broken limb, or a bird trying to fly with cropped wings. Some may say they are constituted with an irritable disposition. Then let them send it to school and learn the art of control. There are some other very important points about which you ask, that I must not overlook. "*Should a wife talk familiarly with her husband about religious*

matters?" To answer this in the negative would be as unwise as so send children for moral instruction to a school of infidels. It is just here vital mistakes are made. So many compel themselves to believe that this is a task they cannot perform. They can. It only needs decision, as in every other important duty. Did you ever notice that Satan's temptations are the most subtle on the most important points? This is one of them. The wife should often draw out her husband on religious questions, not as a jocose or incidental matter, but of earnest interest. True, if he is an unbeliever, it may be distasteful. This is a good way to win him, however, if it is done wisely, decidedly and intelligently. But, if a Christian, this can, and should be made a frequent delight; and I know of nothing that can more soothe or bless a man. Let me add also upon this point, there is a fruitful neglect of prayer with their husbands on the part of many wives. I know of no influence so good upon the husband as for the wife to pray vocally with him. I am glad you have asked me in reference to reading: "*Should she be careful to have only pure literature in the home?*" What a vital question, touching the morals of every member of the family. Good reading is to the mind what good food is to the body. The mind will be active, and must be fed with something; and a cultivation of reading is

pre eminently important. The kind of reading chosen should always be selected for profit. It is not enough to read barely for interest, but one must read for benefit. Who does not know that vast numbers of children have been ruined by reading bad literature, and how many a child and home has been blessed by care in this matter.

In some subsequent letter I will say more to you about the reading of young ladies.

Yours faithfully.

LETTER VI.

IDEAS OF LIFE.

My Dear Niece:—A young man said to me n
long ago: "A young man can hardly find a you
lady with whom he can spend an evening and
benefited by intelligent conversation and influen
The girls are always talking about the gossip of t
town, who was married last, parties, pleasures a
fanciful things of life." He was a young man
twenty-two, a graduate from a State University, ju
entering a professional life, brilliant, buoyant, h
morous and full of social qualities, and a Christian
close observer of men and things, and one who h
evidently commenced life with a purpose to ma
a good mark in the world. But he had no hel
meet by his side. Where should he look for one
fill the vacant chair, speak the intelligent wo
and give the cheering smile. Surely, you w
agree with me when I say there are girls enong
and many of them have had the best of education
advantages. Money enough has been spent up
them, and they have been to school long enough
know something and make grand use of that knov
edge. I hardly think you will say: "Dear unc

he should not have made that remark." No, for young as you are, you know full well that every grade and location of society gives too much reason for it. Before I close this letter I may give some of the causes of this sad state of things. But let me treat a little on the capabilities of a young woman. There is no need that she live without proper ideas of life, or that with her they be meager. I do not believe God has ever given a young lady a responsibility in life she cannot bear, and in bearing it be useful and happy. True, talents may differ, and some be weak minded, but our Creator requires nothing of us we can not do. The truth is, so many are unwilling to do what they can to bless themselves and others, but are ever ready to enter into schemes to their hurt and altogether prevent the design of their being, and the object of their education. I am not willing to admit that they are the weaker vessel. I never was and never expect to be. I do not believe it is true. They may be gentle, affectionate, and even timid, but this rather enhances than destroys their powers. Woman is strong in influence, and how she can grace and mold society to elevation and strength if she will. Now to your question: "*What ideas of life would you enumerate as necessary to make a woman happy and useful?*"

1. Considerately and with the greatest care settle

the question of your worth as a woman. Stu
your relation to your sex and to the world.

2. Make up your mind at the beginning
life that *wealth*, whether you have it or not, can
lay the foundation of your character. You m
have a character not only of purity, but of deci
moral and intelligent bearing. So many g
seem to think if they have wealth it is enough,
by this false idea, life becomes a blank.

3. If you have wealth consecrate it to the
of purposes.

4. Cultivate unselfishness as much as possible

5. Decide in the earliest years of your you
womanhood to hunt out and travel every avenue
need you can find to bless somebody.

6. Make the world as beautiful as you can wh
you live.

7. Shun the foolish notion that you cannot be
to be useful while you are young, because you m
have some fun and folly. If a young person
capable of more happiness in worldly pleasure th
an older, then certainly he is more capable of
in usefulness than an older person can be. "*Is
not a great evil that so little is incorporated i
the educational advantages of a young lady
give her the practical ideas of life?*"

There can be no question of it. A volu
might well be written upon this. It is too t

that the tendency to educate her in the books and fit her to fill every sphere of life by brain work, is sadly defective. And as the people of a great country full of promise, we shall never reach the goal of health and strength we ought until our girls learn the wisdom of physical as well as mental service. The greatest evil is that the idea of wash-tubs, house-cleaning, scrubbing floors, blacking stoves, washing dishes, baking bread, broiling meat, and doing the hardest kind of home work, does not enter into the idea of her education. But lily fingers loaded with gold rings, pale faces, slender forms tightly laced, and an intellect trained to think a little about the teachings of a few text books, makes up the education. What a farce on the design of human life. A soul without a body. First of all, the labor of housework should be made honorable, in such a way that wealth or no wealth, our girls should feel it a pleasure, a privilege, and a duty to go into the kitchen and engage in every possible way in the duties of the house; and I believe that not a few mothers are wronging themselves and perpetrating a positive injury upon many a daughter because, for sundry reasons, they exclude them from the housework, or, in other words, do not train them into it. I would not have a woman become a drudge to the man, or the young ladies enter into slavery when they marry. But let them

be educated to fill every place in practical life with suitable books, at the piano, the pen, the wash tub, the broom, the gridiron and the needle, and then fill it whenever and wherever opportunity offers.

Affectionately,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER VII.

READING THE BIBLE.

My Dear Niece:—You have asked me several important questions upon this most vital of all subjects, the reading of the Bible. The destiny of armies of young ladies has been sealed by the reading or neglecting of this Book of books. I know full well that this book has been assailed by infidels of all ages, and much has been said and written against it. Nevertheless, it stands. And it will continue its conquests and victories against the crusades of darkness and opposition until the end of time. This much I believe, and have a right to believe. There are reasons; there are evidences; there are overwhelming proofs which compel me to believe the Bible. I hand, my dear Etha, this faith over to you, and assuming that you accept it, I proceed to tell you some things you wish to know. *How shall I read it?* With a deep purpose to believe every word of it, for profit and pleasure, whether you understand it all or not. This you do in many other things, all the facts and nature of which you do not understand. Why not

the Bible? When you read about flowers, plants, mathematical principles, astronomy, geology, and physiology, you can trace each point so far, and no further. It is left in mystery. But you believe it and get some delight and benefit for secular and physical purposes. So when, on the same reasonable ground and conclusions, you accept and read the Bible, what blessed delight it brings to the soul, and how it lifts before the vision of your faith the glories of the beyond. I say, then, believe it as you read it, as God's word. It will feast your soul, and bless you as no other book can. In reference to your desire to know "*What helps are best to establish the mind in divine truth?*" I answer: First, read the Bible prayerfully. That is, ask the Lord to grant you his spirit and illuminate your heart to receive his word to bless yourself and others. There are commentaries and text books about reading the Bible, with topical plans, which are good helps. But I know of no helps so good as reading and comparing scripture with scripture. And this I would recommend as a daily plan for every young lady. But I am deeply interested in your inquiry, "*What motive should incite me to read this book?*" Motive of action and course is the vital thing of every person's life. And in this thing it should be pure and determined. To get good and do good ought ever to be in the heart as a

fixed principle of all who study the holy word. Mr. Geo. Muller, the great European philanthropist, says: "My object in reading the word of God is, in the first place, to get good to my own soul." This is right. For one to ever read in speculation and with a view to dealing out doctrines to others, would be like one's always eating breakfast or dinner for somebody else. When you or any other young lady are edified, strengthened, and interested in reading the Bible, you are ready to scatter the same light and knowledge to others. But, above all, you are to have a motive to diffuse it in your own home. "*Do I think the reading of the Bible will create skepticism in the mind of a young lady?*" It can not, if read with honesty of purpose. The internal evidences of its divinity, its purpose, and its success, are overwhelming. They have stood like pillars amid the surging and dashing billows of unbelief in all the ages. No young lady can, with honesty, read the Bible account of miracles and various doctrines, so beautiful and strong, and be skeptical. If she wishes to twist and turn its contents into fanciful channels to suit the inclinations of a carnal heart, and justify the behests of human decisions, it is possible. But our God is not a deceiver, neither is his truth capable of change. And further, you wish my advice. *Can a Christian young lady thrive*

spiritually if she neglect the Bible? No, she cannot. And this is the most important thing for her to learn. Of course there are very many young ladies who make no profession to religious experience, and, in such a state of mind, cannot understand the import of this question. It is, to the religious young lady, vital and far reaching in its consequences. Look at yourself as an illustration. You are young and buoyant. You have professed Godliness in the soul. In affection, knowledge, breadth of mind, and influence, you are capable of great good and great happiness. Your heart is like a large farm of excellent land. newly plowed but untilled. No harvest has ever been gathered from it. Now, suppose you seek and receive the seed of God's word, its warnings and invitation, its joy, love, grace and spirit, its parables, its miracles and doctrines, its light and hope, and the very essence of its truth, which has so largely blessed the ages, what, think you, would be the effect upon yourself and all with whom you have to do, now, in the years to come; and in all the eternity of your soul? Grand must be the satisfying results, and excellent the harvest. And what if you do not do this? Spiritual death, a blighting of the moral powers, and the soul wronged. Inevitable and sad would be these results. As meat, vegetables, bread, and fruit are food for the body,

so is the word of the Lord a feast for the soul. An honest and perpetual study of the Bible will create a thirst for it, and no other literature can be allowed with safety to take its place.

Faithfully for the truth,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER VIII.

IDEAS OF PRAYER.

My Dear Niece:—With the greatest pleasure I enter upon the writing of this letter. You know why. I love prayer. Its power and benefits are incalculable. Many are its mysteries. But am I to refuse the blessings of it because I do not understand its mysteries? As well might you ask me never to eat an apple or a pear, because I do not understand the nature of their germination and growth. There is no subject which can possibly command the attention of a young lady that is of more importance than this. And there is no subject of which the nature, utility and benefits are so little understood. Prayer to God is no more a mythical visionary asking for something than the asking of a child for bread from its mother is mythical and visionary. It is reality. But you say then why do we not always get what we want? Why does not the child always get bread when it asks for it? Tell me. The parent knows it is not always best to answer in just the time and way that the child wishes. "*Tell me the objects of prayer.*" Eternity will not be long enough to do

this to the fullest extent. But I can in a few lines give you some points of knowledge and profit. It brings the soul to God, and it has a wonderful reflex influence upon the heart. It exerts an immense power to prepare men for living or dying. These are stubborn facts that infidels have never been able to gainsay or resist. Why is it that as soon as prayer is engaged in by any person and in any place, a solemn awe rests upon all around? Unanswerable question, but nevertheless a stern reality. And there can be no question in my mind but that God designed it as an avenue through which man can return to his Maker. And a glorious one it is. The very character and life of many a young lady has been made to shine with moral brightness by prayer, silent and vocal. And it is lamentable that no more young ladies avail themselves of this power. The value of secret prayer is untold. A great man once said, "If we would reap in the Kingdom, we must plow in the closet." And I am not only free, but earnest, in saying that secret prayer in the home of any woman is a mighty power. It can not fail to be upon her own heart, her husband's, her children's, and her friends'. And I must tell you that the neglect of this is the great mistake of many a girl. Just here let me press upon your attention one feature, perhaps more important than all others.

And that is, when a young lady marries, she ought to commence life, having vocal prayer in hours of devotion with her husband. Indeed, this should be commenced before marriage, and then continued with the "olive plants," should the Lord bless them with children. There can be no possible power on earth like this. There is scarcely a woman that lives who would not like to hear her husband's voice in prayer, and do you not think he would like to hear the sweet voice of an affectionate wife in like manner? It is just here that multitudes of young wives (and older, too, for that matter) make a great mistake. I have felt this keenly for many years, as I have mingled in various households. I know the blessings of what I urge, and have often been led to mourn over the neglects which are strewn along the pathway of many a man. It is also needful that a young lady should train her powers in prayer at home, and that, too, in a vocal manner, that she may be prepared to engage in prayer in more public places and emergencies of life, such as the sick-room, and other places. The ideas of prayer entertained by young ladies throughout our land in this respect are sad and wrong. They have powers of conversation, song and address to command any circle, social, private or public. Why not employ the same expression of lips, tone and voice, and affection of heart, in prayer to bless

the world? A female voice in prayer is a power. Such is her nature that in word and act she can go far in advance of the man in power and influence. Why not in prayer? It is a mistake of which Satan is allowed too much control. What, my dear Etha, if the young ladies of our land were accustomed to enter our social religious gathering with a purpose to pray? Would not more young men be drawn to the place of prayer and blessing? Would they not be saved? And then, again, would not sweet comfort and gladness come to the hearts of the older in riper years? We know how delighted the parents are to see the young ladies doing well in acts and deeds of early life. Why not encourage them to cheer the hearts of parents, and fathers and mothers in Israel, by allowing their voices to be heard in prayer at the family altar and social church circle? I wish, my dear Etha, that the current ideas of prayer held by our young ladies might be changed so as to bless themselves and their friends more and honor God. Yours truly.

LETTER IX.

MUSIC.

My Dear Niece:—No young lady can be proficient as she ought to be for blessing the world until she has knowledge of music. This should be an important factor in her education. Some argue that they have no talent or taste for it, while still others think they cannot bear the expense, and a greater number fail to become proficient from lack of perseverance. Neither of these are good reasons. Talent and taste can be created to a great extent by application. And the facilities of a musical education are now such as to be within the reach of even the poorest. The home, the church, the social circle, and the society of every community, demands the development of young ladies in music. Man and beast in their very natures are crying out for the blessing of music. And such is its power and importance that God in His holy word has made praise more prominent than any other act of worship. You ask me, "*To tell you the chief value of music?*" Can you, my child, conceive what a graveyard of a place this world would be without music? What darkness and gloom! It would be sad indeed! But music in all its grades, tones, and branches of power, lights

up the world with joy. Babies in the cradle, children in the street and the school, and parents at home are made to feel its inspiring touch. The church is helped on in its work of blessing and saving by music. It could not do without it. The sick-room is often changed by it from a place of pain to one of joy, and from sorrow to peace.

Old age is often soothed, and inspired with hope by this powerful influence. By it Sunday-school work is pushed on and made a lasting benefit to the world. And very nature, with man and beast, rocks and rills, river and ocean, and trees, and mountains, are made to resound with high notes of praise. Indeed, it would be hard to tell in what way, place or state music had no value. And in view of this let me say a few things about your question, "*Should a young lady dispense with music when married?*" I must say she should not. If she ever needed to give attention to this it is in married life. If capable of its performance she would have it in courtship, and, of course, it is desirable at the marriage; and surely the home is not complete without it. I know that not a few young ladies as soon as they become wives, housekeepers, and mothers, think they have no time for music, unless it be to sing to the baby,

"Rock a-by baby on the tree top,
When the wind blows the cradle will rock."

She should make time for music. Nothing can please a husband and bless a home more. You will find that care, labor and expense will pay to keep music in the household. And, my dear Etha, as I prize your happiness, I want to refer to one thing especially, while I am speaking of music in the household. If the Lord should ever give you a religious home (and I hope if you have one it will be this kind), I urge that you always have singing at family worship. It always seems incomplete to me without this. It should be as much a part of worship in the home as in the church. I have often visited in families where there was worship with many children around the altar, and no singing. It was so barren. The children should be taught to sing at the home altar as much as in the Sunday-school. And where there are no children, what could be more sweet for husband and wife and friends than song and prayer together? It would lift them to the very throne of God and of Heaven in the purest love. But you have asked me "*To what extent sacred songs should be employed in the home?*" To a large extent. At least enough to make such good and divine impressions as ought to be made. It is true that the nature, culture, and surroundings of many homes seem to demand artistic music, and this or none at all. But to attempt to fully satisfy a home with this would be

like trying to make a heaven without divinity. There is a something in the moral nature of every heart that demands and gently responds to the hallowed calls of holy song. This is true whether confessed by the recipient or not. And there is no place for this like home. I say, then, give music to the heart as well as to the ear. And while I would have instrumental and artistic music in the family, I would have a large balance of holy song; and from this there will go out a stream of untold influence to comfort and bless the world. Beyond this I want to say no tongue can tell, or pen describe the power of song in the hour of death. And why not? God has made man, and the nature of the two worlds in keeping with this. The struggles, pains, and conflicts of this life have caused the heart to sigh for relief. Here it is! Music charms the soul, and introduces it to the realms of ineffable glory. Angels wait the coming of the redeemed one to join the heavenly throng; and the song of transit is but the soul-enchanting prelude to the inexpressible joy that wraps it in the enshrouding of the new inheritance.

Yours in the blessing of song,

A. P. G.

LETTER X.

STANDARD OF WOMANHOOD.

My Dear Niece:—I am fully aware that the ideas of true womanhood are as various as communities, families or persons. But there is no more vital question that you or any other young lady can consider or work upon. The great Creator has not left us in the dark as to the character and standing of woman in the world. He has made a standard, and told woman how she was made, and why she was made, and he has revealed the history of nations and the ages to show her position and place among men. You need not be blindly led as to the notions of society, of what woman is and what she should be. I would be neither extravagant nor over-reaching while I reply to your question, "*What is the standard?*" While with some it is everything we could wish, as near as a human being could make it, with others it is anything but what it should be. In some of my former letters I have endeavored to set before you the character and power of woman as God made her. And do you think, my dear Etha, it is wise or right for any woman to let down that standard below what she

is able to raise it? I think you have agreed with me in the positions and views of former letters. And now I press this question, is it right, is it wise, to lower the standard to the injury of man or herself to suit some human behest? Well, if a woman does not begin in some way and under some form of influence while young, to make the standard of her life and sex what it should be, will she be likely to afterward? "As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined," is as true in this as other ranks of life. Let us see. Take this standard. Here is a young lady who by some influence has started her life career with the notion that to be a woman, popular and esteemed in society, she must speak in a chaste and refined manner, act under the best rules of fashionable etiquette, cultivate a taste for the wealthy and worldly, mingle alone in the circle of fashion and appearance, with here and there a smattering of some act or gift of kindness. This is her standard. Is this right? Of course some would measure it and say, "Yes." But is this the object for which God made her? Think, a helpmeet for man! And does this help him? Let the history of the past answer. How many a man has been sadly degenerated by such a course. It is neither right, best, or wise. No person has a right to set up a standard of life that shall pervert the object of her being. Now I would not say there are no

good things in the above mentioned traits. There are, but they are in bad company. The aims are wrong, and therefore the goal reached will be necessarily wrong. Take another standard. The young lady has conceived and considered at least some of the objects of her being. She enters upon life with a purpose. The notions of worldly society are not uppermost in her mind. The standard she raises is a tower of strength. No man could be demoralized by its influence. It has been weighed in the balance of the pure and the good among the motives, the acts and the results of the ages. An educated mind, a holy heart, acts commended by the bad as well as the good, a conscience filled with peace, lasting peace, unsullied peace because of man's blessing and the Lord's approval, and, in a word, an influence that shall never harm but always be a source of blessing. Of such a standard woman is capable, and it is both her duty and privilege to raise it. In saying this, I would not rob her of one particle of influence and pleasure in this world which the Lord would have her seek, find, and enjoy. But she is to use the world as not abusing it. She should study to make it beautiful, useful, and a blessing. And if woman does not herself raise this standard, who will? True, the woman "plucked the fruit" and trailed in the dust the flag of divine promise. Must she forever leave it there, and man

be crushed by the weight of its dishonor? The giver of good has opened wide a door to reclaim, bring back and re-erect the standard. He bids woman come to the front and lay her hand to the flagstaff of his love, throw to the breeze the banner of peace, and win man, by such affection, prayer and love as she alone is capable of giving, back to primitive joy.

Affectionately,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XI.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

My Dear Niece:—I know our land and the world are rocking with the agitated question of "Woman's Rights." Why, I know not. Surely woman has more rights now than she can or does successfully attend to. True, many are earnestly and faithfully and very successfully pushing the battles of life with wonderful happiness to themselves and benefits to the world. While large numbers are apparently living without aim or well-defined purpose of good. And some of these are setting up some visionary image of woman's rights such as voting at the polls, entering the arena of public life by way of pleading at the bar, being ordained to the ministry of truth, sitting on the judge's bench, and embracing and perpetuating sentiments of freeloveism and the like. Now, my dear niece, I want to say a few things to you in this letter that may help you to act personally in all the rights that God has given you, and also lead other young ladies in the same way. It is a pity that so many women foolishly spend such a large portion of their life in dictating a course of

action for others, but never seem to have any good purpose themselves. Find out, then, my dear Etha, by the best tests of thought, action and counsel, what God made you for, and then go at it and pursue it to the end of life's journey, which you will find very short at the longest. If it is in the household, act there, if in public proclamation of truth do it. If you are impressed to lecture on reform, follow that; possibly there may be in your heart a call to foreign climes to educate and save your sisters; then you should enter this avenue of pleasure and profit. So I might go on indefinitely to point out the good path of woman. But just here let me define a little so as not to be misunderstood. I would not lay a straw in the way of woman's filling the place for which God made her. No, but rather help her. But when I am asked to endorse unreasonable positions and schemes of unmitigated sin, polygamy and the like, I stop, and enter protest with all my might. When I am asked, should a woman vote at the ballot box, I say no. The remedies that are sought by this could never be realized. Now, the antagonisms of good and bad men meet at the ballot box. It would be just so with women. And I doubt exceedingly if cures of evil could ever be effected in this way. Besides it would expose her to vile associations where she never ought to be,

and where good women would not consent to go, unless it were on some errand of moral alleviation, while the more coarse, rough and dissolute would go, and their wicked votes would make matters worse than they are now. As to a woman's preaching the gospel, I would encourage it in every possible way if she can do it successfully, but would never ordain her by the laying on of hands, because there is no scripture example of this. But woman did preach a risen Saviour, and everywhere labored with the Apostles in the gospel. I am asked, would I have a woman on the judge's bench or in the juror's box. No. How interesting it would be to see a mother with a babe in her arms on the judge's bench, and how enjoyable for a wife to be kept in the jury room all night to decide a case, while the husband is home trying to quiet a crying baby. Sweet indeed. Rarely a woman may be found with a gift to plead at the bar, and if she can do this and properly care for her family let her do it. She may do good, serve her fellow man and honor God in this way. But a woman's rights are in the bosom of her family, first and always. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with her duties, privileges and pleasures here. But as you have asked me, I must speak a few words about freeloveism. "*Why is freeloveism so connected with the subject of woman's rights?*" I will tell you; be-

cause some women claim liberal rights for the great army of their sex, which are justifiable in no sense whatever. It is claimed that parties may marry at their notional option, by their own mere consent, and if they wish, separate at pleasure. What a ridiculous and abominable farce upon the divine institution. It would soon degenerate men to the beastliness of cattle herds and dog pens. So with the Mormon view. Here the purity and God-given joy of marriage are blackened, and sooner or later those who enter it must sink into barbarism and eternal dejection. Against the prevailing sentiments of freeloveism in our age, every young lady should set her face like a flint. She should never consent to listen to a lecture from a male or female who would advocate it. Thistle and cockle seed when allowed to be sown, may take root in good soil. So, many a pure and unsuspecting girl has listened to false teachings to her grief and sorrow. Since the devil tempted Eve, he has been especially busy for the downfall of her sex. And this is marked in the follies of freelovers and freethinkers. Debauchery, sin and death are in this cup. It is a little delicate, my loved Niece, to reply to your question: "*Has not a woman a right to remain single and expect respect among men?*" Most assuredly. But the prevailing fashions and opinions of society make it delicate to treat upon such a point. Because some

girls are what are termed "old maids," they are looked upon as almost outside of society. It should not be so. They should be esteemed as highly as the best. Very few are there who have not had opportunities to marry and be surrounded with happy households of their own. Varied motives and surroundings have prevented. A lack of love, crime, unfaithfulness, death, or some other cause, unknown to us, may have smitten their hearts for long years. The unmarried as well as the married lady, young or old, should have our highest considerations of love and respect in all her God-given relations, surroundings and providences.

Yours, in high esteem of woman,

A. P. G.

LETTER XII.

A GOOD HOME.

My Dear Niece:—"*You ask me what are the characteristics of a good home?*" Important as prominent and effective, a faithful, loving wife, and a kind, considerate husband. And with them the first thing to be received, experienced and deeply cherished, is religion. I say this because of the nature of the "divine institution" in the relation of marriage. No husband and wife can be happy and prosperous, and honor the Giver of their home as they should, without this. You may think this radical doctrine. Radical or not, it is true. There is not a particle of good reason why you or I should let the standard down from this position one iota. How can we, in wisdom or reason? If the institution of marriage and the home is divine, why should it not be maintained as such? The reverse is the curse of our land and age to-day. There is so much looseness in forming the marriage and establishing the home. And then in the enjoyment of religion, two things should be observed with the greatest care. The family altar for prayer, and the study of the Bible as a family. These two

things cannot be neglected with safety. They are to the home what the foundation stones are to the house, and what the leaven is to the bread. No characteristic of the home can shine brighter or be more productive of sweet and hallowed influence. I know of nothing on earth so blessed as family prayer. And in this, where all the circle come together at least once a day for the purpose of reading the word of the Lord, and song and prayer, there is untold blessing. And further, when each member of the family, sometimes the husband, and sometimes the wife and sometimes the child, alternate in their turn in prayer, great is the joy. This benefit may also be enhanced if a habit is formed to hold a family prayer meeting once a week, when each member shall engage in prayer vocally. Such a moral foundation by the training of years would build a wall of hallowed strength around all the succeeding years of the family. Let me also add a word more about making familiar use of the Bible in the family. Do not hand over all the religious instruction of the family to the Sunday school and the church. There should be in this respect a "church in thy house." The father and mother should see to it that special hours are selected for topical family circle Bible readings. I said the father and mother, but I may add the mother especially. If such government as ought to be had

is maintained, it must be mainly under her control. She should see to it that the hour is fixed, arrangements matured and order and system in the happiest style maintained. I may also say that the beginning of this course of life should be on the taking of wedded vows and joining in the new life together. Delay might peril a life of usefulness and happiness. *Another characteristic is neatness.* This should be particularly observed by every young lady who would make a good home. No man likes to see his wife a sloven woman. Many men would be made miserable and unhappy by this. There is a power to elevate comfort and happify the home in the personal and practical neatness of a woman. When not only about her dress and person there is attractive neatness, but when the children are washed and combed, and presented to a returning father and husband, tired and careworn, there is cheer and gladness such as can not be found in the rags and filth of earth. But more than this. How much attractiveness a woman contributes to a good home when she determines her husband shall ever find the house neat and orderly, the walls adorned with varieties of pictures, mottoes, and various tasty forms of adornment. It is good, I assure you. And in these little things are found jewels of worth. There is still another element that enters into the marks of a happy home circle. *A spirit*

of love and gentleness. Nothing can be a substitute for this. And if the wife and mother, the woman of the house, does not maintain this, there is little hope of it in any member of the family. And even if others were somewhat amiable in spirit and disposition, and she were irritable, peevish and ugly, the sunlight is hid behind a cloud. Few indeed are the men who cannot be molded in disposition by the affectionate loveliness of a woman. This is her God-given gift, and she should use it to grace every relation of her home. Another characteristic *is intelligence.* Yet knowledge may be a power for evil as well as a power for good. And this is as true in the family as anywhere. The literature of the home should be pure, sound and inspiring to elevate all the tendencies of the moral nature. Fictitious books, such as low novels, and light stories of wild romance, in column after column of weekly or monthly novel papers, are not fit for the family. In some respects they may not be actually sinful, but they are not good food for the mind. No treasure of such worth was ever committed to a banker as the immortal mind that is committed to the home circle for care. Every such soul in the family should be guarded from sin and trained in holiness. If the woman does not do it, who will? And in view of this weighty thought, the wife should see to it that the home is supplied, so far as

means will permit, with literature of a good kind, and enough of it. If she does not do this, she is unworthy of the trust she has taken. *Economy*, *too*, will contribute to the attractiveness and happiness of the home. Few men can bear extravagance. True, some men are extravagant themselves, and will indulge a wife in it without a murmur. But such usually come to grief. Most men admire a frugal and industrious wife. Even the wealthy like this. I have known some women who had wealth, and seemed to think poverty impossible, and were extravagant as foolishness and fashion could make them. They would train themselves, their children, and all the circumstances of their home, to bow to the most lavish calls, until they were crushed beneath the wheels of bankruptcy, and their home was a scene of unfortunate wretchedness. Better when coffers are full to school every habit to economy, then if the days of darkness should come, there are means at hand and brains and adaptability to use them. The work of the woman is to shape matters in these channels. It is as much her business to save and economize as it is the husband's to make the money. Preparations to do this home work cannot begin too early. Every man with brains and heart is pleased with this. And without it the home is very defective. The last characteristic which I will mention, my dear Etha, is *Affection.*

Love in the home if you do not love anywhere else. Let the home begin in love, continue in love, and end in love. Alas! that so many get the false idea that the honeymoon should last only a few weeks. Such a notion is false and wrong. It is disastrous to many a home, is productive of infidelity and unfaithfulness, and the thought should never be entertained for a moment. The purest love, God-given, divinely consecrated, and hallowed by the affections of true hearts, should form the perpetual net-work of the home circle.

Most sincerely,
A. P. G.

LETTER XIII.

YOU CAN BE A TRUE WOMAN.

My Dear Niece :—A true woman. What unbounded meaning, and almost incomprehensible thoughts that are wrapt up in this term. How desolate that spot on earth where a woman cannot be found. Desolate indeed. But it is worse than desolate if there be one who has the form of woman but whose character has all the marks of untrueness. Bright indeed is that place where there resides woman fair, lovely and pure. It is an Eden of attractiveness. And I do not marvel that you ask the question, "*What is a true woman?*" Do you know, my child, what constitutes the genuineness of gold coin? Pure metal. The gold separated from the quartz and shaped for use. So with woman, God-made and God-given, to bless the man. By culture and grace she may be shaped with more capabilities for the service of blessing than any other created being. The great Creator never gave an angel such an exalted position as woman. Angels may inhabit the celestial empire, strike their harps, and with added carol strains make the arches of paradise ring, but they have no part in

making and shaping unsullied characters to reign forever in the sinless kingdom. This, woman can do, and God has appointed her to the office. What making and molding are in her hands. A responsibility of beauty, loveliness and worth that an angel might well covet. And, as charity begins at home, so does this experience and work. Young lady, as your eyes scan this letter, do not shrink. Your task is not hard, but glorious; not impossible, but blessedly within your reach. True greatness is often in simplicity. So true womanhood is oftener found in the wisdom, spirit and action of a child-like nature than anywhere else. Alas, how many young ladies, when they have maintained purity of character, think they are entitled to the claim of being true women. They might do this and be the next thing to a blank in the world. Character, with nerve and purpose for a good action, is what the world demands to-day. No drone is tolerated with respect; but as the little drops of water make the ocean, so little actions make up our life. And as the blank sheet of paper can not be read without type and ink, no more can your character be understood without acts. The trueness of a woman's principles will ever be judged by her actions. Then I say to you, dear Etha, at once commence to exalt your womanhood into the highest type of excellence. You can do it. If you do not fully

succeed, you can ascend a long way upward. Step by step makes the ladder, and it takes but a little strength to make a step at a time, but by and by the top is reached. You may meet obstacles, but go around them, climb over them, crawl through them, put them out of your way, *go on* by some means. Tunnel the mountain in some way, but never let it stop you. What woman is there who has ever attained any position of worth and goodness that has not encountered many a hard struggle? It is not enough for you, then, to claim trueness simply because you have maintained a life of chastity. Beyond that put all your affections, and moral powers and physical and mental energies into one grand array of conquering forces, and march them out to conquer in the arena of life and they will conquer. In our country, victories, not defeats, are the order of the day. This, many a young lady has to learn by frequent buffetings upon the storm-furrowed ocean of life. But while I have given you these thoughts to inspire you to right motives, action and attainments, I must not finish this letter without at least briefly glancing at your questions that have such bearing upon true womanhood. "*What aids will best enable me to be a true woman?*" Of course I should urge education as first and prominent. The cardinal branches of the schools of learning should be mas-

tered as far as brains and circumstances will permit. And don't neglect music. But do not let your lettered acquisitions of knowledge run riot with worldly wisdom. Seek, then, to have every attainment consecrated to a good end. Ask God to give wisdom to guide all your strength and talent. Do not be aimless in life; and above all, aim high. Girls with a true purpose are the standard-bearers called for. Let me urge you, also, in my reply, that in the make-up of your womanly course, you regard with no small degree of care the *power of association.* Were I writing to young men I should insist on this. Bad company is often their bane; it may be none the less with you. I do not mean, barely, that you be careful what gentlemen you associate with, but look well to your lady companions. Scan their moral beliefs, habits of thought, company and action, and if these are not such as to elevate your mind, soul and body, make a new selection at once. So many young ladies evidently aim only to prey upon society by making a *vain show* in the world. If this is their only purpose, better that they were out of the world, and surely they are not fit companions for one who wants to build up a true, womanly character. Also, my dear Etha, I would advise you to select a *choice course of reading* to help the superstructure of your youthful building. You should not attempt to

read everything, for two reasons,—first, you have not time, and second, you cannot afford to spend time, money or talent on that which will not profit. I simply give you this hint among the aids to true womanhood. But when I get a little leisure I will write you a letter about reading. I will just speak of one other thing that you will find peculiarly helpful. Ask and accept the advice, counsel and influence of the seniors of your sex. This is a time when young ladies, as a rule, do not have that regard for the wisdom of their mothers and friends which they should. Improve the first, best, and every opportunity that you can for this help, and you will never regret it. You ask, "*Can I be true and encourage that which is false?*" Not if you willfully do this. Possibly there may be times when you may seem compelled to do so by circumstances beyond your control. In such an instance you may be able to maintain purity of heart and motive. Yes, and dignity, too. But firm action and decision will increase your personal happiness and win the respect and confidence of others. This question is vital: *What is the best evidence that a youny ladg is a true woman?*" I answer, TO BE ONE.

Most respectfully.

LETTER XIV.

MANNER OF DRESS.

My Dear Niece:—A few days ago I saw a balance which gave a hint at some strong facts and a little fiction. On perforated card-board worked with zephyr were placed on a little cross-bar the words "Ha, Ha." Suspended from this by small red cords was another and wider bar with this inscription, "Modern love;" and beneath this, hanging upon other cords, were two scale pans. In one raised high above the other was placed an imitation heart. In the other two small white bags, filled with bran or sawdust. These bags thus filled with useless stuff, and bearing down the balance, were made to represent the affections and character of the world to-day, while the heart that should outweigh gold, silver, dress, fashion, and every light appearance, and be serving the world with God-like devotion, is made to fly up in the scale, and appear like the winds that pass and are forgotten. "Modern love." My heart sank within me when I gazed at this scene. If mockery, it is a disgrace. If reality, it is a shame. But when I think how much pretention is put into outward manners and

gorgeous dress, I am overwhelmed with the inevitable consequences. But I turn from this lesson of the balance, and let it bear its own weight upon your heart and life, dear Etha. If you do not need it give it to those that do. I fear there are plenty of them. In all the ages fine dressing has effected far too much deception and misery. This is a truth that can not be overthrown until there is a change in manner and custom about dress. But while I make this statement, I would not lower the standard of neatness or good taste a particle. No, not for a moment. I would remove nothing that good reason could dictate. As you ask "*What are some of the characteristics of good dressing?*" I will draw a few lines, at least, for your thought. One mark that should be observed, is to keep the expense of the dress in keeping with the home. If a young lady is at home, and parents are struggling to maintain the family, she should do this. If she supports herself, to undertake to dress above the ability of the family is not wise, because it would serve to raise a false standard between herself and her home. If the woman is married, she should always seek to dress within the range of home ability. Nothing can discourage a husband sooner than a wife appearing in society with a manner of dress he can not maintain. I mean a man who is trying to "get on in the world." And if wealth

abounds in the home, undue extravagance should never be tolerated, because it forms a slavish habit of taste that often comes to grief, and sets up a false standard for children and others. Often wealth is soon gone. Yet the pains of want linger; and under such circumstances, habits of foolish extravagance tell their own story. Then I say, young lady, do not seek to build up a character for happiness and usefulness on such a foundation. Fancy silks and fine ribbons never did furnish a girl with a character of love, virtue, and solid comfort, and they never will. It is not in the nature of the case. I say, then, dress neatly, in good taste, and with reasonable expense, and let the adornment of womanly graces exceed the attractions of outward apparel. But here let me say a word to mothers, and young mothers, especially. Do not dress the darling little ones which God has given you in the sad fashion of not a few all around us. It is not only foolish, but wicked. I mean perverting taste and creating wrong desires in their precious hearts. Nature has made them angel-like enough, and they do not need the adornment that many foolish mothers put on them. How many are nursed and dressed to death. Tastes are unconsciously formed by many a mother that become the utter ruin of her daughter afterwards. In these tender years the seeds of moral death are sown in the elegant and extrav-

agant dressing of many a girl. Abundance o wealth can never apologize for such disaster. N person can love little children more than I; and i is because of this love that I appeal to the mother in this way. Together with the blessed nature o little children, water and soap and simplicity o dress will make your little girls attractive enoug to command the world around them. But you ask "*Is comfort to be observed, especially in dress?*" Listen, my child, while I turn to this vital point I apprehend that not only comfort is implied i what you ask, but health, happiness, and even lif itself. Do you think God made the women to lac themselves up so much like the hooping of a but ter-tub or beef-barrel, as many do, to their ow misery and wretchedness? By this you know many a girl almost becomes a self-murderer. I is high time we had more earnest and determine reform in this matter. Will you, and all the young ladies who read these lines, begin at once? Wha a service you may do your country and age if yo will.

Most truly,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XV.

EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG LADIES.

My Dear Niece:—This matter of employment for young ladies should not be passed lightly. It is vital, both for health and happiness. It is utterly impossible for a young lady to have that development she ought of mental and physical strength unless she feels the weight of responsibility. To this she should be trained. And let me add, it should not be a heavy load that she is not able to bear. Care should be had in this. And room given amid the daily work and cares for laugh and play. The demands of buoyancy and youthful society are vital in their proper place. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." This is also true of Kate and Eliza. So give full latitude to the humorous and buoyant in her nature. But to answer the ends of this letter, my dear Etha, I hardly need allude to play. There is full enough notion given to the girls in this direction. The tendency of our age is by far too much to keep the girls for parties, entertainments, and the like, rather than to serve in some profitable way. Anything but to engage in real hard labor. And, as sure as there is a future, I believe the women of

our land will yet find that, in proportion as they have lowered the standard of labor, they will be without muscle, strength and nerve, and a physical fitness to enjoy life and be a blessing.

"*Is it essential for a young lady to have employment?*"

I suppose you mean some useful service to command her time and talent. Most assuredly. By all means teach her to do something. Any notion foreign to this must be disastrous to soul and body. And I believe mothers, as a rule, are culpable on this point. While the little girl is three, four, six, and eight years old she should be taught to work. Not at too hard work, but to do the little things. She is just as capable of doing little things in work as she is in play.

Why not trim and wash the dress of her doll, sweep up the dirt she has scattered in play, pick up the dishes upon the table, brush up the crumbs, set back the chairs, pick up the chips, and put the kindling wood in its place, pick up the potatoes in the garden, carry away the dressing from the vegetables, and help pick over the berries? Not to overtax her tender physical energies, but to do the little things. As long as our girls are brought up to think that Bridget is to do all the work, we shall never have such women to bless our land as we ought to have.

"*Should she work if she has wealth?*" Yes. This should make no difference so far as the design of her life and happiness are concerned. I affirm, and shall continue to affirm until it is shown to the contrary, that wealth cannot give solid comfort. Of course, it is convenient. But it cannot give true happiness. And a young lady that excuses herself from labor because she is wealthy makes a great mistake and is in danger. The danger is that she will become worldy and sinful. And as far as she can control her wealth, it will be lavished upon the path of unsatisfying tastes. But let her learn the art of labor and industry, and her tastes will be so cultured as to apply her wealth in unbounded good, good that shall bring unspeakable pleasure to her own heart and gather fragrant memories around her name when she lies in the silent grave. And who would not crave such a lot?

You ask, "*Is she justified in seeking her own pleasure while her mother drudges at home?*"

No, she is not. And I have been long convinced that many a young lady has to blunt the keen edge of her conscience to do this. If there is a place on earth where love should reign supreme, it is between a daughter and her mother. No young lady need tell me she really loves her mother if she is willing to leave to her the work of washing

dishes, sweeping floors, caring for the little children, Monday washings, house cleaning, and the like, while she is a devotee of pleasure, novel reading, social calling, varied parties, and circus visiting. She cannot make me believe it. Her highest happiness does not lie in this direction. She should be by the side of her loved mother to help and to cheer. And here her pleasure would flow like a river.

"*Is it a disgrace to do housework?*"

There is no doubt but that it is so considered by many. This ought not so to be. And in reality it is not true. But, as I can devote but a few lines to this, I want most emphatically to say that it is my conviction that our girls will never be what the demands of the hour require until our people, in city and country, learn to consider housework respectable. The servant girl should be taken into the family and treated as one of the number. Why not? You say, "They are servants. They are beneath us." What is that you say? "*Beneath us!*" Who made them so? Men, by human opinions and prejudices. Surely this is not the work of the great Creator. They have minds, souls, characters, life immortal. They should be called upon at proper times to mingle in the family in a social way, and in song and prayer. A radical reform in some way in this respect, in city and country, is the need

of the hour. I know the great obstacles that meet us here, but wisdom and perseverance can overcome them. God requires it. It should be so, if for no other purpose than to make house labor honorable, for the good health and happiness of our girls and coming wives. This sentiment is not communism, but Christianity and common sense.

"*Is it her duty to become familiar with all kinds of domestic service?*" By all means, as far as possible. There is not one young lady in a thousand who lives to mature years, but that sometimes has a need for such knowledge. And mothers and daughters should spare no pains for these acquisitions.

Much more could be said about the employment of young ladies in professions and different spheres of life, but this letter is now too long, and, hoping these few hints may do some good, I close.

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XVI.

READING.

My Dear Niece:—Now I will sit down a few moments to talk to you about reading. And first, let me say, every young lady should have a library. Be it large or small, she should have a library. I know it is seldom you hear of such a thing as a woman's library. But how often we hear something said about Mr. So-and-So's library. Why not let the women have one too? They have brains, heart, mental powers and moral influence. Why not encourage them to get accumulations of books, good books, books that will strengthen their powers of thought and fit them to give mental nerve to society? We give the girls as well as the boys education, and the time has come when they are being allowed a place in the best seats in our colleges. In keeping with these advantages, the knowledge they acquire should be located in the best possible position to develop and enlarge. Young ladies ought to be versed in knowledge so as to entertain and instruct all around them. Their associations with young men demand this. And to filling the place of wives and mothers, it is indispensable.

Nothing can be a substitute for this to rightly mold the minds of the children and home. It is sad to see young ladies as soon as they are out of school lay down their books. And if they give themselves to reading at all, it is a serial story, or some other light production in which they wade through long pages to get a mere impression of a moral. Why not cultivate a taste, make advances, and accumulate an array of books that will give more substantial brain-power, and thus bless the world? Think of it, my dear Etha, and begin a library at once, and make no cessation until you have reached a good end that will satisfy your brain and heart.

Now, I will answer some of your questions.

"*How shall I know what to read?*" Consult, first, your tastes and inclinations. If they are right, tested by the decisions of your better judgment, follow their dictation. If not, change them now while you are young. It is a golden moment. Now you can mold your mind, as well as a boy can learn the carpenter's trade, or a girl the milliner's. Then do it, and compel your mind to right tastes and culture, both in the acquisition and use of knowledge. Then I would urge that you make a rule to select no book or paper for reading but that will prove a benefit. Life is too short, and the mind is worth too much to waste on tales of fiction

and romance. There is no end to good books and papers, as well as bad ones. You can select without difficulty. It is true, there are books of allegorical fiction such as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and the like, that will give you lessons of good entertainment and instruction on their every page. Beware of trashy reading matter out of which you cannot get a sentence to make you better.

"*What amount of time shall I devote to reading?*" Some, every day. And from one to two hours a day if it is at all practicable. Remember that many little things that you often allow to command your time, will not profit or satisfy yourself as much as reading.

The mind needs food as much as the body. Then arrange to give it proper time, as much as you would breakfast, dinner and supper. How many girls waste time that should be spent in reading.

"*Does light reading unfit a young lady for that which is permanent and good!*"—No more than a man's taking liquor and becoming intoxicated will unfit him for good service. But it will act the same way, in a greater or less degree. And just here, I want to suggest *two things.* One is, when a selection of reading is made for the railroad cars, do not take a novel of ordinary cast, but take a substantial book, magazine, or something that will do you good. The other is, read the Bible every

day. Do not stop to debate its divinity or truthfulness. But read it. These are questions that have been settled long ago, and the unbelief and infidelity of the age, or the ages, can not unsettle them. Read, then, this book of books and it will do more to prepare you for good reading than any other means.

"*Is reading aloud a benefit?*"—I should recommend the practice to all young ladies. It would be a personal benefit. But more than this, she ought to be fitted to read in the family, and especially in the sick room.

Affectionately,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XVII.

FASHION.

My Dear Niece:—What a field for thought, action and influence is this. Every body is more or less controlled by fashion. "*What is fashion?*" "The state of anything with regard to its external appearance. A model to be imitated." So you see fashion can be good or bad. It may be in dress or in habit, in learning or in ignorance, in wealth or in poverty, in filth or in cleanliness, in vice or in virtue. Anything that can be patterned after individually, or as a community. I am aware that this view may divert a little from the notion of your mind. It is nevertheless true. Doubtless you have thought that what we call fashion consists alone in gorgeous apparel, gold, ornaments, and the like. Not so. "*Are not many fashions hurtful?*" Yes, they are. This is self-evident. A large portion of every community conform to evil fashions. Although young ladies are seldom profane, I want to just mention here the custom, perhaps I may say passion, to swear. Fearful custom! It is fast becoming a disgrace to our land. You may say, what have young ladies to do with this fashion?

If nothing else, they allow it to go unrebuked by far too much. It is hurtful; and then another fashion, a sad one, is the use of tobacco. I am aware that few women use the filthy weed. Some do. But do you suppose that if young ladies set their faces like a flint against this pernicious habit, it would stalk abroad unbridled and unchecked in every rank of society, as it does? No, no; and I am quite fully convinced that this growing evil will never be corrected until she, whose sex suffers most from its filth and annoyance, shall take the field, form a mighty army, and crush out the enemy. So with intemperance, a fashion indeed in many circles, but a baneful one. Oh, that the fair, affectionate, and influential young ladies of our land, by the millions, would besiege the Congress of our country with commanding petitions until it should obey the summons, and enact laws utterly forbidding the manufacture, use or importing of intoxicants. What happy hearts, happy lives, and happy homes would follow. I might also allude to the fashion of playing cards that decoys many a soul in the way to death; and that of dancing, that so seducingly allures many a young lady into sin, covering her path with roses until she plunges into the vortex. Many other phases could be presented, but you catch the answer to your question: "*Are not many fashions beneficial?*" Of course every wrong thing

has its opposite. So with fashion. When you see a young lady truth-loving, sedate, modest, kind, gentle, lady-like, and commanding a vast influence for good, would you not like to pattern after her? Or, in other words, to follow her example? A custom to be happily social is to be welcomed with gladness. Sometimes I find a whole community quite given to a fashion of high-toned morality. This proves beneficial to all of its inhabitants. I am well aware that some will say: "That is all foolish, distasteful, unsatisfying." It may be to those who claim it thus. We are not debating questions of taste, but of benefit; and I affirm that there is neither reason or wisdom in any position or practice that will work an injury physical or moral to any person. I mean that we have reason to believe will do so. Fashions that will elevate and bear fruit in true happiness are to be admired and followed. Methinks yourself, and every reader of this letter, will say yes to this. Then what are we to say to the opposite! There are fashions of pleasure, study, work, and society, that are beneficial. Then wisely select and follow them. "*How far ought a Christian to follow fashion?*" Just as far as it will conform to a holy life. Etha, this question lies at the very root of Christian experience and Christian life. I do not believe you, or any other respectable girl, can be pleased with a

hypocrite; and certainly not with hypocrisy. The world does not read the Bible or religious books very much, but it reads you and reads me. It scans the life of the Christian; it translates every line of the vocabulary of our life acts. They often understand us better than we do ourselves. Understand me, I have said that we may have holy fashions as well as sinful ones; and I must say, as a man determined to stand up for the highest principles of virtue, that it is the Christian's business to follow fashions of holiness and virtue. For example, there are a large class of our fellow-citizens who run as naturally to the fashion of theater-going as water runs down hill. They think it is right, legitimate, love it, and pursue it. This is a fashion Christians should not follow. As a branch of entertaining society it is pernicious. Its very make-up compels this influence and conclusion. Whoever knew of a theater manager being a Christian? You might as well undertake to have fire without heat as for an unchristian person to form suitable society and fashions for a Christian. What is a Christian? Not a bare professional human being, but a new creature. The subject of a kingdom that is not of this world; though living in the world, not of it. Having a citizenship in heaven, he breathes joys that this world knows nothing about. This many a sainted soul on earth, and many a

one in glory, can attest. I know it. Others know it. Neither wicked men nor devils can gainsay this fact. They have that which can satisfy the soul; and when the fashion of the world passeth away, they will continue to bathe in the ocean of unsullied bliss. Every emotion of our immortal nature exults over this blissful heart experience, or cries out for it from the depths of the heart; and there can be no deception in this matter. There is no lasting satisfaction in gold, silver, and the pleasures of the world; but there is of a true knowledge of God in the soul. The theater, then, cannot spread a table suitable for the Christian. It would be like asking one who had been accustomed to drink from a pure stream now to drink from a muddy pool. Then, in a word, I say to all Christians, do not follow a baneful thing to your hurt because it is fashion. "*Is a fashionable woman necessarily a vain and worldly one?*" If you mean because she dresses finely, and moves in the higher circles of culture, I answer no. Possibly there may be a heart of love, grace, and consecration behind all this. I believe I have known such, the genuineness of whose experience, and the correctness of whose life none could question. Circumstances beyond their control may have actuated them along such fashionable lines. Piety can reign as well in a palace as in a cabin; and there

may be no more religion in a calico than a silk dress. Some people have just as much pride in poverty as others do in riches. What should be guarded against is taking steps in any fashion that will hurt and destroy. "*Is it a weakness to adhere strictly to the established laws of society, or evidence of strength of character to follow one's convictions in matters of conformity?*" Evidence of strength to follow convictions. This is a vital point that our girls need to study and learn thoroughly. With all the mighty powers of a young woman, wisdom and decision are jewels. Rightly-toned, no young lady can have too much of these; and in these times when fashions, good and bad, change so often, she needs them. Firmness for the right is the demand of the hour. The world admires it. And with all the love of my heart, the wisdom of my mind, and the power of my pen and voice, I urge you to take this position and hold it.

Sincerely,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XVIII.

YOU CAN BENEFIT YOUNG MEN FRIENDS.

My Dear Niece:—I am intensely interested in the questions asked about the relations and influences between young ladies and young men. None are more vital and none can be more powerful for good or evil. It is in the light of this feeling and this position that I write you this letter. Listen, my dear Etha, while in answering your questions, I give some hints and helps to direct you in your intercourse with young men.

"*For what are young ladies suited in their intercourse with young men?*" Much everyway. Before I proceed to give you some ideas of important things in their intercourse, I want to just call your attention again to the superior adaptability of a young lady to shape and mold the life of a young man, such as God never gave to an angel, and such as no other created being ever had. An angel cannot sympathize with man in his low estate, and surely cannot help him in his needs, moral, mental and physical. The headship of woman in influence and power over the man is indefinable, unexplainable and simply immense. If rightly

balanced and appropriated, is likewise sweet, soothing, elevating and blessed, amid the rough tossings of the world. She is suited in the first place to win him. The very office of her nature is to constrain and attract the man. Not passionately, but to elevate and build him up in the best position of Heaven-given manhood. This she can do as can no other, and this she is called upon to do. Of course she can take the opposite course if she chooses and debase him if she so elects. But every instinct of her nature will recoil at such a thought. The sad step of misfortune in some way will have hardened her nature and plunged her into the plottings of evil before she can consent to this. Then how much every young lady should exert herself at the very beginning of life, to lay plans, study methods, and fully equip herself to do duty for young men. And you know there is no lack of opportunity. The schools for this training for both sexes are numerous. The young ladies want beaux and the young men want to be beaux. Disposition and determination for the right thing is what you need. Winning power, I say, is in your possession. And you could no more divest a young lady of this, than you could remove a mountain with one revolution of a horse-power engine. By this you, and you alone, are suited to lead young men up or down. And just here let me allude to one feature decidedly

calling for attention at this present time. It is sober thought and intelligent intercourse. Do not misunderstand me. I would not have the girls and boys live without reasonable pastime and pleasures. Social amusements they ought to have and must have. But they should be studied, closely calculated, and wisely entered into. Worldly pleasures are running riot, and our young people are becoming notorious for passionate rioting. The fruit of this is already beyond the budding. It hangs in clusters. It is fair but bitter. The serpent is striking his fangs into every avenue of society, and poisoning the blood in well-nigh every artery of our social being. The church is fast becoming disgraced, and the better classes of the world are becoming alarmed at the worldly follies and sins that are being led on often by our choicest young ladies. And there will be no change until the young ladies make it. You can do it and you ought to do it. God your Maker, and to whom you must give account, requires it. Your own happiness and the happiness of young men demand it. I have said that intelligent intercourse is the demand of the hour. A young man is introduced to a young lady. He seeks her company. The last strawberry festival, church fair, Pinafore dance, that "round dance" of hugs and hops (which, alas, too often forms a stepping-stone to ruin), the even-

ing at a theater, and the neck-tie party, have all alike prepared her to fill his mind with shallow nonsense and anything but knowledge and influence that would elevate his mind and heart. His higher nature is craving something better. She has been educated, and could impart knowledge, love, and blessing. But she is a lady and it would be considered rude to otherwise than receive the entertainment, though it be distasteful and even disgusting. Her manner and affections controllingly win. Like the fountain that starts the little rivulet that broadens into the vast lake, like the little spark of fire that kindles into the conflagration of a city, so has she set in motion thought and decisions vast in proportions. What possibilities are before young ladies if they will improve them.

Having this predominating influence, they are suited to turn the pennies of young men into channels of saving, economy and wealth. Do not think you have nothing to do with a young man's pocket book. You have much. He will do just as you say. If you encourage him to get fine presents, hire liveries on Sunday, take you to the demoralizing influences of the theater and pay heavily for it, lavish his money on useless, or worse than useless, notions for your pleasure, you need not wonder that he is a spendthrift, and by and by you have a scanty, needy home that should have otherwise been happy,

prosperous and well supplied. It is just what you have made it. I just call to mind a young lady who encouraged her affianced to give her a diamond ring far beyond his means. After her marriage she had to be cared for by her friends. You shape the contents of his pocket book as well as his heart and brain.

You are suited also to his moral training and decisions. The religious state of your young men friends cannot escape your influence and notice. These they will feel keenly. I have referred to this in some former letters. But, Etha, if there is anything in the world that needs repeating and pressing home again and again it is this. I may be talking to some who will read these lines, who are utterly indifferent to the religious condition of men. If so they will have little weight. But I know there are multitudes of young ladies who heartily sigh to have good young men about them. Such are the ones above all others to make them good. You can lead them and make them good. And I know of no way so effective as prayers with them. What well-wishing woman ever lived who would not like to hear the voice of man in prayer. And do you think your voice in like manner would be powerless? Your voice from a heart full of love, affection, tenderness and womanly blessing, powerless? Never, no, never. This is the greatest moral

power in the world. Because some will scout this idea I cannot withhold it. It is true. Try it and you will find it so. The men of our land are, to-day, sighing in their hearts for the want of this.

And this leads me to say, also, that in my judgment there is no class so well adapted to lead on the work of reform among young men. And what a work would be wrought to save them from the debasing influences of strong drink, tobacco and bad associations if each young lady as she has opportunity, would do the work she ought. Will not you, my dear niece, begin to bear your part at once as never before?

"*Can this benefit be given by example?*" Of course much can be done in this way. But we live in a time when *words as well as acts are needed.* Young ladies ought to speak out, to rebuke the bad and extol the good. To condemn sin and insist upon virtue. And a young lady could no more do all her duty in these things by silent example, than could a school teacher do his work by example with no instruction by words.

"*Are young men susceptible to this great influence?*" To think after all the beaux you have entertained, after all your frolics with young men, and after all the good influence you have exerted, you should ask me such a question. But I suppose you wanted to see what I would say. Well, my

answer is that they *are* most decidedly so. Yes, decidedly. No person or class of persons can be more affected by this influence.

Is it true that young ladies have more influence over young men than young men over young ladies? They do. The very nature of the case forbids it being otherwise. Respectfully.

LETTER XIX.

SKEPTICISM OF YOUNG LADIES.

My Dear Niece:—Treating on this subject, I mean skepticism in regard to the Bible, religious truth, religious thought, and religious experience. Unbelief is sad. Faith is good. And I judge, dear Etha, by the questions you ask me upon this matter, that you are no stranger to the temptations of many girls to entertain doubts about the greatest and best of all systems that ever blest the world. The imbedded inclinations of every heart are to raise the puny hand against God. This is natural. It cannot be otherwise. The depraved heart forbids. In earlier or later years, a radical change must be wrought, to turn this tide of thought and action. Here is the conflict, the moral battle-ground. Here the girls begin the warfare for soul bondage or soul liberty, and I confess it is a warfare often of no small magnitude. Nevertheless, in every instance she may have a victory without the loss of a single battle. Brain, heart, and every fiber of her nature, will often be strained to the highest tension in this battle of thought, doctrines, and conclusions.

"*What is the cause of skepticism in young la-*

dies?"—One thing, and only one. The natural state of the sinful, carnal heart. Do you see that wide and deep flowing river? The fountain away up in the side of yonder hill was its beginning. It might have gathered many tributaries in its course, but that was its beginning. So with this young lady so skeptical and unbelieving. Her natural heart was against God and the higher moral state. Do you tell me she was amiable and lovely when a babe and a girl? That may be. So with many. But if you apply the test as the chemist does to the counterfeit, you will find the seeds of antagonism to the divine will in that heart. They are in the heart of every girl. With some, more marked and determined, and with others, in a milder form. Training at home, social associations, surroundings at school, public teachings, and varied circumstances, may contribute to the development of this, I may almost say, prevalent evil. It is dangerous for a young lady to even cherish knowingly one thought of unbelief.—"Breakers" are there, and the beautiful vessel may soon be dashed to pieces upon them, and that, too, in the darkest night. Her virtues and character are of too much value to be thus let loose unbridled. Advantage will be taken by wily foes to build upon the original cause, and add other causes to the poisonous sentiments of unbelief. And with

all the power of my pen and heart, impelled by the sad testimonies of a long array of witnesses in years past, up to this present, I urge and entreat young ladies to beware of the entertainment and consequences of skeptical hearts. In one form or other they degenerate, and continually lead downward.

"*Do not men generally, however skeptical they may be themselves, admire religious belief and conduct in woman?*"—In all my life, and in all grades of society, not a single exception to the affirmative of this question have I known. Neither do I ever expect to know of one. In spite of all infidel sentiments and influences, this conviction lies buried throughout our land. Thanks for its resurrection on all proper occasions. Every man wants a good wife; and every man wants a mother to guard and bring up his children, who is good, and that by every word and act of her life gives assurance that her instruction shall be for good, and not evil. Think of a wife and mother who is a Sabbath breaker, a swearer, perchance a drunkard, a thief, a liar, or an infidel, any or all of these! What man man could respect and love such a one as the trainer of his children, and the head sunlight of his home? Yea, may I not ask, can he admire her in crude manners, coarse and unwomanly appearance, and anything but gentle and lady-like

in speech? No, no! A true husband ever wishes to admire the presence and appearance, and belief of his wife, yea, of every woman, whether she be his wife or not. This is the very instinctive longing of his heart. Would that I could press this in thunder tones upon every young lady. It is just here that many a young lady makes a mistake. For fear of offending her beau, or losing her chance of marriage, she will smother her convictions, and appear to have indecision. No young man who is worthy and has good elements of manhood in him could respect such a course. Good minded men cannot be fooled in that way. But otherwise, to my certain knowledge, they admire religious decision in any woman. And to all the young ladies who shall read these lines, I do feel to state this feature strongly.

"*What are some of the baneful effects of skepticism upon a young lady?*"—Skepticism is invariably demoralizing in habits and influence. And not unfrequently fearfully so. This is felt adversely upon her influence at home. It weakens the power of her moral forces for her own happiness and that of others. This is vital. But it does not stop here. She has associates and influence, and here her sad and false doctrines will exert their power. It will often lead her best friends to grieve and be suspicious of her future influence. I do

not mean to intimate that her chastity may not be right, or her life pure, so far as moral citizenship is concerned, but it is deeply imbedded in the heart of the people in this Christian land, that if a woman is a skeptic, she is not as strong morally as she might and ought to be. But the saddest effect is, it will ruin her soul.

"*What is the best cure for her skepticism?*"—Stop it. This can be done by yielding to honest convictions. I mean the convictions that in spite of all unbelief hold faithfully to the commendation of all that is good. An honest reading and study of the Bible will go a long way toward removing this moral incubus that so preys upon society. You are not the first one who has inquired, "What is the best cure?" Many a one well-nigh stranded upon the very sandbars of unbelief has done it. I warn, entreat and beseech you to stop in these first steps of your danger. And I say again, read the Bible with an honest heart. You should dread to be caught in the meshes of unbelief, as a burnt child would dread the fire. It would be as difficult to gather choice fruit from your life after you have allowed infidelity to take root, as it would be to raise a good crop of vegetables from a nice garden after the weeds and briers had been permitted to grow. Check, then, the very buddings of doubt in your heart. Do not say, "I cannot." You can.

You can control this as well as your education in other things. I do not mean to say it is all a matter of culture. God your Maker will help you. He is pledged to do it. The farmer does not grow the wheat. He plows and sows, and looks to Him who sends rain on the just and on the unjust, to give the crop. Then, my friend, employ the means, read good books, study good things, seek wise counsel, and ask the All-wise to help and deliver you, and he will do it. Let no young lady tell me she cannot. She might just as well tell me she could not save herself from the assaults and threatenings of an impure life. You may, and ought, as a young lady in the very beginning of womanhood, to lay hold of helps and experiences that will bless your whole life with the unspeakable joys of true faith.

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XX.

TREATMENT OF THE UNFORTUNATE.

My Dear Niece Etha:—This letter opens a subject well worthy the attention of the highest gift. It is no less than love and care for unfortunate girls. I do not mean those left orphans or without homes, but those who have taken sad steps into sin. Amid my heart sympathies and earnest work to save my fellowmen for years, this subject has called forth pity and love, and burning words of rebuke, hope and winning; rebuke to many good women who idly look on without extending help and hope to the worst who have fallen.

All good people are agreed that the condition of an unfortunate girl is a sad one, and that a helping hand should be stretched out to the rescue and blessing of every such one. But the question is, how, when and by whom shall the work be done? Of course I can only give a very few hints in this short letter. May the Lord ripen them into words and acts of comfort by somebody and in some way, to some unfortunate girl who is eating the bread of sorrow. Sure am I that it is a burning shame that the more fortunate woman and girls of our land

treat this class with the contempt and neglect that they do. I know that female nature is keen and sensitive. And when a girl has taken a misstep all her sex feel that they are brought into reproach. But this is no justification of neglect of the abused and sad, even though they may be in the lowest depths of filth and degradation. Not long since a woman, fine and commanding in words and appearance, stood before an audience of women, and stated that she knew a young woman who went astray; step after step she plunged into the depths. In character she had reached almost the lowest depths of infamy, blackness and misery. In words obscene and blasphemous, her equal could hardly be found. She had indeed become a terror to all around. Sitting one day upon a box in an unfurnished room, haggard and wretched, a kind, loving woman—one of Jesus' representatives—came by her side and printed a kiss upon her forehead. "What did you do that for?" was the ugly response. "Because *I love you*," was the reply. "Nobody loves me," was the retort. At this the kiss was repeated. It subdued her. She was melted into tenderness, repentance and virtue, and was saved. After relating the narrative, the speaker continued: "And that miserable, lost woman, now saved, stands before you to-day." Of course the whole assembly were melted into tears, tenderness and love, but the

question comes, "Who'll be the next," to go and do likewise? Will not every woman, young or old, who reads these lines, ask herself the question, Have I personally anything to do in this matter?

Is it the mission of woman to treat such a class for reform?

My dear Etha, how would you answer that question yourself? I hear you say, "Certainly." And I join you heart and hand in that answer. When a young lady is sick with fever or accident, do you call the carpenter, the shoemaker, the baker, the laborer, or *men* of any profession, to soothe, nurse and care for her when a woman can be found to do it? Never. Then why in the saddest of all sickness? Call in the helps of men if you will, all the helps possible, but let the *women* stand in their lot and place in this matter.

A diamond ring slipped from the finger of an elegantly dressed lady into the filth and sewerage of the gutter as she alighted from the carriage. She asked a man near by to put his hand in and get it out. He waited a little, then made the effort, but failed, saying it had probably washed along and gone down into the sewer. "Gone down into the sewer!". What a startling thought about the diamond; but a million times more dreadful about the girls of untold worth, who are being washed into

the sewer of moral and eternal death, while so many proud, elegantly-dressed women are asking the men to do the work of saving them. As the words, "It has probably washed down into the sewer," escaped the man's lips, the lady took off her glove, and pushing back her silks, ruffles and laces, and plunging her hand into the filth and dirty water, soon brought up the bright diamond. This woman did what the man failed to do. So the women of our land everywhere should push back the silks, laces and ruffles, and go in search of the lost girls who once shone so brightly, but are now buried in the sewers of sin. This is one of the imperative demands of the hour. But I hear you say many good young women hesitate even to be seen in such company, because of the fear of public opinion. In the name of heaven, then crush public opinion ! ! I know that this idea of "public opinion" is as a mighty besom that is sweeping against the tide of moral reform. Go, in spite of it. Guard well your character and life. Take a police, half a dozen if need be, any men or women of character, to stand guard while you go behind the curtain to bring forth the lost jewel. Oh, that the young ladies of our land would undertake this work, and give the world to understand that they mean business. Then, what a power and what results !

"*Should they be treated with charity?*"

There is no other way to treat them successfully. Jesus did so, and in carrying out the work it is evident that he summoned to his aid all those women who labored with him in the Gospel.

Sin may and should be reproved at proper times and places, but kindness and love are invariably the sure remedies. Kindly sympathy is what the fallen and suffering want.

"*How should they be treated if belonging to one's own kindred and circle?*"

Very much as though it were otherwise. The sin is the same, the sorrow of heart is the same, the pangs strike just as deep, and the needs are the same. All these just the same before God. There is a "blood tie" of heart nearness that should not and can not be broken. But in the cure of the malady this should be overlooked as far as possible.

It is true that the lost diamond while it is in the sewer is worth just as much, whether it belongs to you or any other, and when found shines just as bright. It is the getting it out that we are after. And when restored, it may be more precious to the owner than ever before.

"*How should they be treated after being reclaimed?*"

Not by neglect, as if the work of saving was complete. There should be the greatest care and nursing. Entertain the greatest degree of confi-

dence and assurance in the matter. Then use the means to establish this position. Every reform that has ever succeeded in the world has employed these weapons. As with the success of an enterprise, so with an individual. The apparently strong babe needs for growth and life to be tenderly nursed and cared for as much as the sickly one. In teaching sympathy and help this should be made a personal matter. And do not forget or neglect to pray *with* as well as *for*, the restored ones. Sit by their side in a retired way not unfrequently, and point out comforting and sustaining words of Scripture, and bow with them in mutual vocal prayer, bringing before God every temptation, weakness, want and need. This will help, happify and save.

"*How is society wont to treat the unfortunates?*"

Usually as though they were abandoned of God and man. And it is a sad picture to know of this treatment as we do. It is Satan in public opinion. True, there are noble exceptions to this. But in the church and good society, where we have a right to look for help and "bread," they get neglect and a "stone." And of course the world, the chilly world, will not do the work of reform, and could not do it properly if they would. They might do much toward saving the lost body, but the soul they can not bless. I must just add before closing this letter, that there should be a guarding of our words

in condemning the unfortunate, because we may know so little of the motives and circumstances which led them astray. Matters entirely beyond their control may have forced the first step. And then, perchance, unintentionally they were driven on by those who should have given sympathy and love, and have led in the better way.

YOUR AFFECTIONATE UNCLE.

LETTER XXI.

TEMPTATIONS AT SCHOOL.

My Dear Niece:—You know little now about the influence of your school days. It makes little difference whether they are improved or unimproved to make them a felt power in the years to come. If evil, it will be felt. If good, it will be felt. As true as there is a character, it is being stamped in school days. And it is, doubtless, too true that the great majority of our youth fail to comprehend the good possibilities of their educational privileges until they are past. Failure indeed! And a lifetime is not long enough to measure their regrets.

It is so sad that many boys and girls, in district and town schools, in academy and college, seem to have little idea that the school to which they are sent is other than a courting rendezvous, or a place to tease the citizens by taking off wagon wheels, unhanging gates, ringing bells, shearing horses' tails, and cutting up generally. If they left home with other ideas, they seem soon to have forgotten them. But in every school there are those who have measured life to a vast extent in their

youth. School to them was not mere play. Purpose they had, and purpose they pursued. And what sunshine these days cast upon the years of their life. How many a girl has found it so! Her life was mapped out for something besides fun and frolic. Brain and heart had she, trained and ready for brilliant victories amid life's battles.

But you ask:

"*What do you consider some of the most common and dangerous temptations of a young lady at school?*"

Failing to apprehend the situation in the aim of her studies. Not having canvassed this, she is unable to grapple with difficulties at the very outset of her course. Soon she lags behind and gets discouraged altogether. Probably most are tempted just here, and those who succeed have to rally much perseverance to get over the hill difficulty. Another temptation is the neglect of the Bible. I would as soon advise a young woman to counsel her husband to build a house upon a sandbank for their life home, as to encourage a girl to pursue a course of lettered training without reading the Bible every day. It is no use to try to disguise the fact, wherever the Bible is read and considered an important factor, when a course of studies are pursued, a far better code of morals comes forth than where it is not. Still another temptation is bad company.

This can be often found in schools as well as other places. And the girls are often prone to fall into line in these ranks. We are not obliged to go outside the circle of our school centers to find bad company. Indeed, the eye of many a bad heart is eagerly watching these places. This is a good place to sow tares whenever and wherever the enemy can plant a seed. How many of our fair daughters do things and mingle in company at school such as they would be ashamed to have known at home. Some think it is no harm and will do no harm to thus cover up things from their parents. But I think, and I know, it is a very dangerous road to travel. But perhaps there is no more baneful temptation to young ladies in school than bad literature and its attendant evils. Within the last few years especially, a snare of this kind has been set for our daughters and sisters. Catalogues have been obtained from numerous schools, and thereby obtaining the address, letters, pamphlets, and periodicals have been sent, decoying the girls to send for "love powders," and the like, and thus are put into their hands the weapons of worse than moral death. Women or men who would do such a thing, if possible, would seem worse than devils incarnate. But so it is, and it most earnestly appeals to parents and daughters to beware. The temptation to attend places of

amusement during school sessions is often baneful. If yielded to it almost invariably infringes upon the studies; besides, it is often of an immoral tendency.

"Are the influences of school antagonistic to Christianity?" Not necessarily; but they are often permitted to be. They ought to be helpful, and, I believe, generally are so. Yet this fact does not disguise the continual efforts of the enemies to our best morals to plant thistles, and cockle, and tares in the best school yards of our land. It is fast becoming a prevalent practice of unbelievers to establish infidel societies under the very eaves of our schools. But, thanks to the Giver of grace and truth, "the foundation standeth sure."

No: the influences of school are not against Christianity. Indeed, they are our strongholds. Christianity without education would be like steam upon the railroad without an engine. And every young lady with school advantages before her, will do well to shun temptations, and push her way on to victory.

Sincerely,

YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XXII.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

My Dear Niece:—Actions and words show on every hand that it is the aim of everybody to take such a course and occupy such a position as will insure happiness, true happiness. This is the want of every soul, both for this world and another. With one moment's thought young ladies are fully aware of this. And, my dear Etha, it is my purpose in penning the few lines of this letter to contribute some hints that may tend to your happiness. And not only to make you happy, but *as* happy as it is possible to be. Sure am I if I can do this, I shall make myself happy as well as you. Do not draw a long breath now, and say, "Uncle is going to write as though he had been drinking vinegar, and as though there was no happiness in the pleasures of the world." Not so. I would not have you shut yourself away from the unhurtful pastimes of the world.

I know that in my former letters I have said some plain things, and insisted on such a course as will please your Creator, bless all around you in the world and reap to yourself great happiness.

And if you follow a tithe of the suggestions I have made, sure am I you will not be wanting in the truest features of a happy life. And your eagerness in asking me about this matter (some of which questions I shall now answer), seems to give me assurance of your being a sincere inquirer after the best way to be happy.

"*Does not sinful happiness leave a sting?*"

That is just what it does. What a record the sinful pleasures of the world attest upon this point. And it is indeed strange that so many eagerly rush into schemes that will happify for the moment or the hour, with a full knowledge that the next moment or hour they must endure a sting like the poisonous bite of the rattlesnake. Sad the picture. It does not pay. And with what satisfaction will you spend the years of your old age if now in early life you form a purpose and make some plan by which, as far as possibilities will allow, you will never indulge in any scheme of earthly pleasure that will leave a sting.

"*Do the pleasures and excitements of society satisfy?*"

Gratify! Satisfy! Look at these two words. Think of them. Weigh them. Now give me the decision of your better judgment. Methinks I hear you say, "The transitory pleasures of this world may gratify, but cannot satisfy." This is

true, my dear Etha, and it is folly for wise or foolish men to undertake to show to the contrary. How important, then, to wisely select such amusements as will please and elevate, rather than those which have bad associations, dissipate a good frame of mind and debase the character. Such amusements there are, and such should be selected by every good-minded person. Then you will have gone a long way toward securing true happiness for this world. While I am touching this point, let me suggest one method. The girls should be willing to ask direction of those who have had experience and traveled this way before them. If you wanted to go on a journey, which would you think the wisest, to ask direction about the way of some person who had been over the road before and had known all about it for a long time, or one who had never been in that way and knew nothing about it? You say, be led by the former, by all means. Then why should our masses of young people rush so madly into the pleasures of the "paths of life," scorning the uplifted voices of so many who have passed its rugged ways? Why? And echo answers why? There is no reason except that it be sinful willfulness. No wonder that so many fair girls and choice youth are often found drinking the bitter cup of sorrow, and that the columns of our daily and weekly papers are fraught with troubles, wrecks

and moral deaths, issuing from the circles of worldly pleasure parties. And not unfrequently what had been considered our choicest and best are the victims. Happiness it is called. Pleasure there may be, but it is like a teaspoonful of honey to a gallon of poisoned water. Let me ask you, my friend, never to sip it again until you have thoroughly tested its qualities. Do not set me down as an old fogy. I know that there are plenty of pastimes and pleasures for our youth without entering into the doubtful and hurtful.

"*Can true happiness ever be attained?*"

Yes, it can be. We have assurances of this from the Almighty One, the wisest and best of all beings. Would he teach and require us to be truly happy if it were impossible? No, no. Mark, I do not say perfectly happy, but truly so. In no sense by our own merits and qualities, and in the view of our own eyes and conceptions, can we attain perfectness here. But we can attain such moral purity of motive, purpose and act as will assure us satisfying happiness. Show me a girl who determines to live to do all possible good to her fellows about her and avoid everything that would hurt her own soul, and I will show you one truly happy.

"*May young ladies hope to find true happiness in their future homes?*"

Not unless they make it themselves. No one

can make a happy home unless the wife and mother does. Husband, children and all the surroundings may contribute to this end. But it is impossible for any or all of these to do it unless she, whom God has selected to be the sunlight of the home, leads the way. While I assume that every young lady, or nearly every young lady, expects to marry and have a home, let me add that not one can expect the happiness she ought to have, unless there has been aim at it in her early habits and culture. As well might a man of forty expect to become easily and well educated, if he has neglected to learn the letters of the alphabet when young. Her culture should be stern and rigid in this direction. In some of my former letters about the home I have insisted upon earnest attention to these things, and would here repeat in substance everything I have there said. For the happiness of our girls, and young wives and mothers; yes, and of the husband and children, I feel this matter most keenly. Not only should true happiness of the home begin in the earliest culture of girlhood, but it should find a decidedly important juncture when the young lady accepts the hand of a husband. A pledge to support and protect her does not fully meet the demand of God's requirements in the divine institution. He is to pledge happiness to the household. Yea, he is to bring it. And from this moment

this treasure is committed to the wife. If she keep it and care for it as she can and ought, she may expect true happiness. If honest and genuine, her husband will keep this pledge just as she leads him to its perpetuity.

YOUR LOVING UNCLE.

LETTER XXIII.

CONSECRATION.

My Dear Niece :—This letter will embrace some thoughts upon a most vital subject. Indeed, it is one of great moment, character and force. Among young ladies there have been many in past ages, and there are many to-day, who have interpreted the meaning and entered into the experience of consecrated lives. What happiness, what usefulness, have beamed forth from such lives.

"*Set apart to a sacred purpose*," are words used by a great and good man to *define true consecration.* Of course, you will need to study and give attention to fully comprehend this. It is true that every enterprise and pursuit in life into which one enters may bear the marks of consecration. But sacredness may not be written upon all. Agriculture, and the mercantile business, art, song and various phases of professional life may be consecrated merely in a secular sense. But this is not what I mean in this letter. It is a higher and grander pursuit of a consecrated life, such as God will honor and man will admire. That which will place talent, time, profession, every branch of busi-

ness and property under contribution to subserve the highest moral ends of benefit to our fellowmen. With the powers and gifts I have accorded to women, and especially young womanhood, in former letters, do you wonder, dear Etha, that I should desire, earnestly desire, the consecration of young ladies? You will never see the time again in all your life when consecration will be more easy, sweet and blessed, and accomplish more satisfying ends to bless the world around you. Youth is the time of all other in life for the formation of character and habit. Acquiring a lettered education, learning a trade, and preparing for years to come in the pursuit of life's duties, are considered imperative in early life. Why, then, neglect a religious and moral training until mature years? We have too much notion that every secular interest must be attended to in early life, and the consecration of our powers in the sacred "further on," and peradventure in old age if we chance to live that long. This is a mistake. It is all wrong. The whole teaching of the divine code is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Let a young lady embrace this idea, and consecrate her heart, brain and faith to its experience, and what a bright light would she be in the world. How her days, weeks, months and years would be fraught with a

satisfying portion. It is this that I urge upon your consideration. Your every power should be laid upon the altar of consecration. It would not lessen at all your joys, but rather increase them, and the benefit to yourself and others would be tenfold. And when you ask me,

"*Does our Creator require consecration to him?*"—I am filled with solemn awe on the one hand, and blissful delight on the other. Solemn awe, because of the consequences of its absence, and blissful delight because of the hopes and joys of its experience. Who could love God or be happy with him forever if they were not consecrated to him? Surely he requires this. The very existence of harmony and holiness in our hearts depend upon this. So also the purity of our words and acts. And with a consciousness of this in your heart, joy would be your portion, daily, and nightly. Your very looks, words, acts and life, would be admired by all. This is the assurance of Jesus. But you say, many profess it, but do not show its proof. Just so. But this is because so many get the notion that under a religious profession they are to be church dolls, and have nothing to do in the church but be petted. They have no idea of work for Christ and the fallen. To follow the fashions of society, be worldlings and professional church boarders. Thousands and tens of

thousands of young ladies appear to have this attitude. They are exceptions, and enough to lead the van. Under this leadership let consecration assert her sway, and the whole aspect of every community will change. How I long to witness such a scene. You and others of your ranks can do much to hasten this millennial dawn. Will you do it? It is to this purpose that God requires your consecration.

"*What is involved in a full and satisfying consecration?*"—I think I can show you by a few suggestions. The first thing to be observed is, a candid canvass of its worth, merit and importance. You can give attention to this at once. It is worth your while. Do it the first thing. And when you have done this, just as true as you wish to be happy and useful while you live, I doubt if you could even wish to seek a substitute for this course. Entering this "valley of blessing so sweet," the ecstatic joy which would fill your soul would far outreach any earthly vision you ever knew. Secondly, be careful to decide wisely for this world, and eternity. Do not treat that word "*eternity*" lightly. Thirdly, enumerate the items that must be included if it is successfully made. To itemize this matter is a power for success and blessing. Intellect, eyes, voice, heart, hands, feet, influence, time, friends, property, relation to the church and

society, all these, yea, everything upon which you can put estimate in the inventory of your being. Let your altar be unto God and holiness. Such a consecration will be divinely sealed. That is if you believe in it with all your heart. Faith is an important factor in power and experience. You must believe in it, and that, too, for your personal life, and God will bless you.

YOUR AFFECTIONATE UNCLE.

LETTER XXIV.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TRAINING.

My Dear Niece :—I want to ask, Are you a Sunday-school girl? Not do you attend, but do you love to go, and are you enlisted and deeply interested in every Sunday-school enterprise? If you answer in the affirmative, I have to say it is well worth your while. No interest is superior to this in the welfare of men. Of course, I do not mean this to supersede the home training. But our training in the Sunday-school has a bearing such as no other position can afford. And let me tell you, that whatever part others may take in the work, young ladies are filling a most important place, and will continue to do so more and more. Are you ready for the emergency of the hour? Do you realize the need of this present time, and its influence upon your future years?

"*Do we ever foryet our Sunday-school training?*"

No, never. It is not possible in the nature of the case. And, just here, I want to remind you of the invariably good influence of the Sunday-school. Who ever heard of any injury coming

therefrom? This land is dotted with multitudes of good men and women who owe what they are to the Sunday-school. It caught them up while wandering upon the broad acres of temptation and sin, and set them down in the garden of the Lord. And there they live, have lived, and will still live, and there they will die, leaving fragrant memories, such as the world would never have known had it not been for the Sunday-school.

"*How long should a young lady attend Sunday-school?*" Young or old, as long as she lives. In the planning of this institution, the divine founder made no provision for graduation or diplomas. It is a life institution as much as the home. And it is a mistaken notion that as soon as a young lady has got well into her teens she is above the privileges and blessings of the Sunday-school. The very object of the Sunday-school forbids this. What is it? It is a place to acquire a knowledge of the Bible. It is a grand place for this. The very best outside of the home. The home is first the Sunday-school next. And if young ladies fill the place they ought in the Sunday-school, they will not only want to continue as far as possible, but when they come to bear the responsibilities of a home they are better prepared to fulfill its duties. And while this is true the young lady should make up her mind never to withdraw her influence and

presence from the Sunday-school while life shall last. It is not possible for a mother to do her work of moral training at home as she ought if she absent herself from the Sunday-school where her children attend. And I want to urge you to employ all your influence to stop the evil habit now very prevalent, of young people leaving the Sunday-school as soon as they are married. It is just then that they need this training.

"*Do you think the Sunday-school gives advantages not to be found elsewhere?*"

Certainly it does. Not a position is there anywhere in life as important or valuable. The value of its privileges are unexplainable, nevertheless true. And millions have attested this fact. Friends, friendship, wealth, and honors have no such bearing upon our lives.

"*Would you advise a young lady, not a member of the church, to teach in the Sunday-school?*"

There are circumstances in which I would advise her to do so; but they are rare. When there is no other one to be found who can or will teach, and a young lady can be found, who, although not a Christian, is intelligent and of good moral standing in the community, I would give her a class. But with the admonition that, in view of the nature and imporance of the work, it is her duty to at once give her heart to God. I have known some

such teachers speedily blessed. But, while treating upon this point, let me add that barely uniting with the church will not fit a young lady for Sunday-school work. To be a member of the Sunday-school is one of the most responsible positions on earth. It is like laying a strong foundation for a house. With a hundred and sixty odd hours in the week the teacher and scholar get less than one hour with the class. What preparation of heart and brain are needful for the task. My experience and observation has been that young ladies have more influence in Sunday-school work than any other class of persons. And how immeasurably would the power of this work be increased if all the young ladies who are capable would engage in it.

"*To what extent will the Sunday-school afford a young lady proper moral training?*"

I will say this in answer to your question: It must be vast, to say the least, and such as will ever be fraught with the best of consequences.

Not an avenue of all her life will she tread without feeling its power. And the very warp and woof of this training will exert an influence upon her and upon those about her in every coming year.

And this influence has ever been honored of God and man.

As ever, YOUR UNCLE.

LETTER XXV.

A TRUE WOMAN.

My Dear Niece:—Now I have come to the last letter of this series in which I have endeavored to help you in the early steps of life. And I am glad to know that you have received with so much favor most that I have said. I know I have said much that many young ladies would consider an overdrawn demand, and entirely unsuited to the life of to-day. While still others would admire and be profited thereby. But if I did not believe that these letters would be a blessing, I would not even finish these closing lines about true womanhood. Much that I have written before, you will find daguerreotyped here. Line upon line is the need of the hour. As the driving of the nail to build the house needs blow after blow to give it a strong hold in its place, so in the framework of society, every young lady needs line upon line of instruction and help to make her strong in her place. I will not say that true women are rare or exceptional. No, no, they are many. But there are enough girls now living to multiply them a hundred-fold.

It is not enough for a woman to be pure in character, to be pure in life. Something more is needed,

She has many gifts, and many sides of power and influence. And all these must fill some place among men.

"*In what does true womanhood mostly consist?*" The very first thought of a girl in her desires and decisions to be a true woman, should be to aim at the best position known to the life of a woman. As with our great men who have frequently come up from the more humble walks of life, so often the women who have become great lights in the world, have sprung from the most unpromising places and ranks of society. The brightest gems of gold come often from the roughest and blackest chunks of stone and earth. No girl need of necessity consider herself beneath the best positions of her sex because she is lowly. Cheap calico is no criterion of character. But if she comes up to a place of power, blessing and influence, she *must aim* at it. And it will pay well if she does. No other can elevate her. She must come up herself. Help enough she will find all around her, but to attain relies upon herself. Let this thought, my dear Etha, seize upon your heart and find anchorage as no other ever has for the blessing of your life. Nor would I be understood to encourage the girls of poverty and humble circumstances alone. But of all classes. In homes of affluence, education and refinement, are many choice girls. All of these are not true women by

any means. Indeed, in many of these there is in various forms sin in high life. There is as much need of aim here as any where. Fathers, mothers, neighbors, friends, wealth, honor and surrounding in the world, all or any of these cannot make a girl a true woman. Whether she abound in wealth or walk in poverty's vale, her own consecrated energies must determine her traits of character and positions of womanhood.

"*Will a true woman be likely to neglect religion?*" No, she will not. Indeed, she can not do so very long and maintain the impulses, powers and influence of a true woman. But you will cast your eye around as you read this and say, There is Mrs. So-and-So who is not a Christian, and she is a good woman. Very likely. But many a woman is pure in character and good in life who is not, in a high and noble sense, true to herself and to the world, woman as God made her. And I venture that you will invariably find the ideal woman you have set up to be wanting in the prime sense of a true woman. More or less the moral impulses of our impressions recoil within us at the idea of a woman "without God and without hope in the world." This I know to be an undeniable fact, however much it may be untold and unexplainable. And indeed I believe it to be true that women themselves feel this, and often to a very great degree.

"*Will a true woman be sought after in cultured society?*" To be sure she will. It is the very place where she will be greatly admired. Her influence and life will be appreciated here as in no other circle. The notion that some have to the contrary is a mistake. True goodness is always the handmaid of intelligence. And the woman that has the adornment not so much of plated gold and outward apparel, but the vital purity and trueness of the heart, is sought after and admired. But, mark you, there may be some in circles that profess culture and fashion who are only shams, and could no more be happy in the presence of a true woman than would a bloated drunkard just from the gutter be pleased with himself standing before the looking-glass. As amid the counterfeits of the world, good money is always at a premium, so true character is always highly esteemed by the best and even worst of men.

"*Can a woman be true to herself and always carry out her convictions of duty?*" This is the very place where her trueness will shine the brightest. Many lack courage, but the world admires integrity and devotion to the right. A woman who is true to herself will be likely to be true to others. Such the world will admire. And further, the convictions of such a person would be likely to tend to blessing and not to cursing. Let her follow

these convictions of duty, and her character will shine as no tongue can tell. Woman's action, with true fidelity to her convictions, is the great and imperative demand of our age. Children, husbands and homes demand it. And every kind of reform is sighing for it. There should be an uprising of the girls at once in this matter, and she who leads the van will be a benefactor to herself and her race.

"*What will be the reward of a true woman?*" First of all, a deep realization of having shunned a shadowy path and lived a life of respect and blessing. And besides this, which can but bring conscious peace, she feels the approval of the All-seeing and All-knowing one. This is worth more than rubies and affords the heart joys beyond expression. She has hope of blessedness in the future state. Not a hope fostered by the sham of some false doctrine, that deceitfully tells her to live for self and the world, be a devotee of pleasure and fashion, scatter influence that can only debase the morals of those around her, treat the path of unsatisfying thoughts, words and deeds unto the end, and then step into ineffable glory. No, no. But that hope of faith, trust in Jesus, which has led her along the way of self-renunciation and whole reliance upon him for eternal life, which has led her to fill up her many years to instruct the ig-

norant, feed the poor, clothe the naked, comfort the sorrowing, lead the blind, teach the children, soothe wounded hearts and scatter roses in her pathway every day, week, month and year of her life. A hope that welcomes death, that hails with joy the second coming of the Lord from heaven, and bids the portals of the celestial city give her an abundant entrance into a heaven of promised glory.

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